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A SHORT HISTORY

OF

MEDIÆVAL PEOPLES

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FROM THE DAWN OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA TO
THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

31603

BY

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CONTENTS

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Founder of the Empire	3
II.	Roman Literature—The Early Period	12
III.	Roman Literature—The Time of Cicero	21
IV.	Roman Literature—The Augustan Age	29
V.	Tiberius	37
VI.	Gaius (Caligula)	47
VII.	Claudius	53
VIII.	The Christians	61
IX.	Nero	71
X.	A War of Succession	83
XI.	Vespasian	90
XII.	Titus	98
XIII.	Domitian	105
XIV.	Nerva	114
XV.	Trajan	117
XVI.	Hadrian	127
XVII.	Antoninus Pius	135
XVIII.	Marcus Aurelius	140
XIX.	Roman Literature under the Early Emperors	149
XX.	Commodus	158
XXI.	Pertinax, Julianus, Septimius Severus	164
XXII.	Caracalla, Macrinus, Heliogabalus	171
XXIII.	Alexander Severus, Maximin, the Gordians, Maximus and Balbinus, Gordian III., Philip	181
XXIV.	Decius, Gallus, Æmilianus, Valerian, Gallienus	188

CHAPTER PAGE

XXV. Claudius, Aurelianus, Tacitus, Probus, Carus, Carinus and Numerian 198

XXVI. Diocletian 207

XXVII. The Six Emperors 216

XXVIII. Constantine the Great 222

XXIX. The House of Constantine 233

XXX. Jovian, Valentinian I., Valens, Gratian 241

XXXI. Theodosius 250

XXXII. Religious Leaders of the Fourth Century—Athanasius . 258

XXXIII. Religious Leaders of the Fourth Century—Ulfilas, Basil . 266

XXXIV. Religious Leaders of the Fourth Century—Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose 274

XXXV. Religious Leaders of the Fourth Century—John Chrysostom, Jerome 283

XXXVI. Augustine 294

XXXVII. Alaric the Goth 300

XXXVIII. The Breaking up of the West 309

XXXIX. Attila the Scourge 317

XL. The Vandals 325

XLI. The Last Days of the Western Empire 332

XLII. Why the Empire Fell 337

XLIII. Theodoric the Great 344

XLIV. Eight Emperors of the East 354

XLV. Justinian 368

THE SARACENS.

I. Arabia 379

II. Mecca 386

III. Medina 396

IV. Last Years of Mohammed 407

V. The Early Caliphs 415

VI. Hasan! Hosein! 424

VII. The Ommeyads 432

VIII. The Abbassides 440

CHAPTER PAGE

THE CRUSADES.

I. What Led to the Crusades? 451
II. The First Crusade 462
III. The Second Crusade 474
IV. The Third Crusade 486
V. The Fourth Crusade 496
VI. The Fifth and Sixth Crusades 505
VII. The End of Crusading 515

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE.

I. The Successors of Justinian 525
II. Maurice and Phocas 532
III. Heraclius 538
IV. Seventy Years of Turmoil 548
V. A Dynasty of Reformers 556
VI. Byzantium at its Zenith 569
VII. A Macedonian Dynasty 580
VIII. The House of Basil 590
IX. The Seljukian Turk 600
X. Alexius I. 609
XI. The House of Comnenus 620
XII. Byzantium Receives her Death Wound 629
XIII. The Latins in Constantinople 639
XIV. The Catalans, the Ottomans, Timour the Tartar . . . 647
XV. The End of the Empire 655

APPENDIX.

TABLES OF SOVEREIGNS 663

INDEX 667

LIST OF MAPS.

PAGE

I. Roman Empire at its Widest Extent in the time of Trajan and Hadrian, about 117 A.D. 127

II. Roman Empire and the Barbarians about the time of Constantine, 350 A.D. 222

III. Roman Empire thrust aside by the Barbarians about 500 A.D. . 344

IV. Arabia 379

V. Widest Limits of Moslem Rule before Byzantium fell . . . 447

VI. The Crusades and the Greek Empire 522

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOUNDER OF THE EMPIRE.

WE concluded our former volume with a sketch of the reign of Augustus, thinking that the history of the Roman Republic must be imperfect without his reign. But if the reign of Augustus is necessary for the true understanding of the history of the republic, it is even more necessary for the true understanding of the history of the empire. We deem it better, therefore, to return to the history of this great man in the beginning of the present volume. Thus that which follows will be more intelligible, and each volume will be complete in itself.

The murder of Julius Cæsar did not restore the republic as his murderers had hoped it might, but led instead to a long war of succession. For the murderers themselves there was indeed no chance. Cæsar had been far more popular than they imagined and they only saved their lives by flight. Marcus Antonius was for the moment the foremost man in Rome. He got possession of Cæsar's papers and made a free use of them, carrying laws, confiscating and granting property, and professing that amongst Cæsar's papers he had authority for all. 44 B.C.

There were two others who might conceivably be candidates for supreme rule; Lepidus, the governor of Hither Spain and Gaul, and Sextus, a son of Pompey, whose power, that of an outlaw, lay in Further Spain and Sicily. With both of these men Antony established friendly relations, winning them by fair promises.

Octavius, a grand-nephew of Julius Cæsar, was living at Apollonia when his uncle was murdered. Hearing that he had been made his heir, he crossed to Italy and travelled to Rome. He was but nineteen and had little influence, but he could bide his time.

Antony played his part in Rome so recklessly that he alarmed the Senate. When, therefore, he departed to Cisalpine Gaul, Octavius persuaded them to send an army against
43 B.C. him, led by the two consuls and himself. The battle of Mutina was fought, Antony was defeated, but both consuls were slain. Octavius now expected to be made commander-in-chief and a consul, but owing largely to Cicero's influence he was passed over. Angry at this, he marched on Rome in threatening fashion, whereupon Cicero and the other senators yielded and did as he desired.

Lepidus had now brought his forces round and joined Antony near Forum Julii. Octavius marched to meet them, but instead of fighting they conferred at Bononia and agreed to divide the Roman world between them. The Triumvirate then came to Rome, and, sad to say, inaugurated their power by slaying their enemies and confiscating their property. Amongst their victims was Cicero who had insulted Octavius.

Though the triumvirs claimed the Roman world they had not yet obtained possession. There were enemies in the field; Sextus in Sicily with a powerful fleet; Brutus and Cassius in
42 B.C. Macedonia. Leaving Lepidus to take care of Italy, Antony and Octavius crossed from Brindisi to Macedonia, and defeated Brutus and Cassius at Philippi. The regicides did not survive their defeat and the conquerors were able to make a fresh division of authority. Antony took the East, Octavius took Italy and the West, Lepidus received Africa.

Antony now yielded to the soft influences of the East and lost ground; Octavius attended to his government and gained the confidence of his subjects; Lepidus had little influence.

40 B.C. With some vague idea of asserting his rights and checking the growing power of Octavius, Antony crossed to Italy and

laid siege to Brindisi. But neither he nor Octavius really wanted war, so he was pacified and returned to Greece, taking as his wife Octavia, his rival's sister. He had, however, already met Cleopatra, the famous Egyptian queen, and was wholly under her influence.

Octavius also married again. The year before, he had 38 B.C.
divorced Scribonia his wife, and now he married Livia, the wife of Tiberius Claudius Nero, a distinguished noble to whom she had already borne a son, Tiberius, afterwards emperor. Three months after her marriage with Octavius she bore another son to Tiberius Claudius. He was named Drusus, and became the father of Germanicus and of the Emperor Claudius.

The power of Octavius increased continually. With the aid
of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, a most able lieutenant, he over- 36 B.C.
threw Sextus Pompeius and drove him from Sicily. He died the following year. Lepidus then tried to seize the island, but his troops deserted him, and he was deposed and exiled. Thus the whole of the West was united under Octavius, who had associated with him two most able ministers, Agrippa and Mæcenas. These men helped him from the beginning and remained his faithful councillors throughout.

In the East Antony was doing little good. His lieutenant, P. Ventidius Bassus, had done splendid service against Parthia, but Antony threw away all his chances and soon lost prestige. Cleopatra had now gained complete ascendency over him, and he was presenting Roman provinces to her and her sons. The
Romans were indignant, the Senate by decree deprived him 32 B.C.
of his command, and declared war on Cleopatra.

At the battle of Actium the united forces of Antony and
Cleopatra were overthrown by Agrippa, and the unhappy 31 B.C.
lovers fled. At Alexandria they were again attacked, and 30 B.C.
being easily defeated they saved themselves the ignominy that would have attended capture by taking their own lives.

Egypt was formally annexed and became a Roman province.

Octavius was now sole ruler of the Roman world. Julius

Cæsar had also been sole ruler, but Octavius was in a more powerful position than his great relative had been. Cæsar had been surrounded by aristocrats, many of whom longed to recover the power of which he had deprived them. Some had been slain, such as remained were for the most part adherents of the Julian line. As for the people they were tired of civil war and thankful to obey any ruler who gave them peace.

Octavius had a fine chance and he used it well. A man of rare administrative ability he gained the confidence of every class, and without appearing to grasp at power soon had everything centred in himself. He had won his power by the sword, but he invested it with a constitutional character, and harmonised it with the institutions of which the Romans had been proud and to which they still clung, reconciling autocratic rule with republican forms in a way which gave satisfaction to all. Years after when about to leave the human stage he asked the bystanders whether he had not fairly earned the applause of the Roman people.

27 B.C. When the Roman world was at peace Octavius formally laid down the extraordinary authority with which he had been entrusted, and asked for a new and constitutional grant of power. The Senate accordingly granted to him the consular imperium for ten years, and elected him commander-in-chief with the exclusive right of levying troops, waging war and making treaties. He was made chief magistrate at home and was entrusted with the sole government of the most important provinces.

Beside an able man possessed of such enormous power there could be no competitor, and Augustus, as he was now entitled, was supreme. More and more as time went on all power was gathered into his hands, yet with such show of legality and constitutional method that republicans were satisfied. Moreover, the arrangement was avowedly temporary. The imperium was granted originally for ten years, then renewed again and again. The powers thus conferred were afterwards embodied in a form of statute and carried for each emperor in turn.

Over this system of government Augustus presided for forty years, and when he died the empire was firmly established and the republic was a thing of the past. As a matter of fact the word republic had been losing its true significance in connection with Roman government long before the days of Augustus. In early days when Rome was but a city the word meant much, but when Rome conquered Italy and afterwards added conquest to conquest the word was meaningless. A vast empire governed by a handful of Roman nobles was no republic. Rome had become an oligarchy of the most selfish sort, and as there was no possibility of a return to republican days it was better that the government should evolve into an autocracy. This change came about in the reign of Julius Cæsar, who was emperor in all but name. Then came Augustus, a most worthy successor, and after him Tiberius, another able man. These three men established the imperial system so firmly that the republic was forgotten.

The domestic reforms of Augustus have been dealt with in our first volume and need not be again detailed. It will suffice if we mention such matters as bear in an important degree upon the further history of the empire. The delimitation of the frontiers, the reorganisation of the army, and the establishment of a civil service are specially important.

The Roman Empire was now of enormous area, and the frontier problem was of the highest importance. In some parts of the empire the question was simple enough.

On the west Roman territory was bounded by the Atlantic and the English Channel, for Augustus made no attempt to cross to Britain.

In the south, Africa, from the Delta to the Atlantic, was Roman. Here the desert formed a natural boundary, checking all desire on the part of the Romans to advance farther, even though not preventing the incursions of the desert tribes into the province.

In the east the frontier was less easily fixed. The Persian Empire of earlier times had made way for the Parthian with

whose kings Rome had waged war not always successfully. For the Syrian province the desert boundary sufficed, and farther north the Euphrates was the natural boundary, though between it and the Roman province there lay certain native States such as Pontus and Cappadocia. Beyond the Euphrates lay Armenia, a State within the sphere of influence of both Rome and Parthia, concerning which quarrels would inevitably arise. Augustus preferred not to annex, believing that as a free and independent State it would form the surest defence for the empire. His judgment was right, and it would have been well had his successors adhered to his policy.

On the north the question of frontier was specially serious. Gaul was now quite conquered, and had to be protected from the northern tribes. The question was whether the Rhine should be accepted as its frontier or whether the province should extend to the Elbe. The Rhine seemed the natural boundary, but tribes were wont to cross that river, and Julius Cæsar had found it necessary to carry punitive expeditions into the country beyond. Campaigns were accordingly conducted by Drusus and Tiberius which had for their object the extension of Roman rule to the Elbe. They were successful, a Roman province was being created; roads, bridges, canals were in course of construction and Roman troops were
9 A.D. stationed there. Suddenly there was an uprising of the tribes, Varus, the Roman general, was defeated and his legions were destroyed. Augustus drew back within the Rhine, and solemnly warned his successors not to go farther. Further south the Danube took in some measure the place of the Rhine, and when the reign of Augustus closed there was a continuous chain of provinces along the Rhine and the Danube from the Black Sea to the German Ocean.

With the frontier policy army reform was inseparably associated. In early times the Roman army was composed of Roman citizens, who went to the wars when the country was in danger and returned to their avocations when the fighting was done. But in later times Rome had conquered so much

territory that generals raised armies as they best could, and kept their soldiers together for long periods of service. Many soldiers were provincials, having no special sympathy with Rome or its institutions. If they had a good general they were attached to him, and were ready to follow him anywhere. They were poorly paid, and their chief hope of fortune lay in the power of their general to obtain gratuities and gifts of land for them when the war was over. To obtain these they would as lief fight the Senate as the Gaul. Such armies were rather a peril than a protection to the State.

During the civil wars which closed the republican period the soldiers had become numerous. There were fifty legions in all. Augustus reduced their number to twenty-five. The old militia idea was abandoned, and a permanent force was raised by voluntary enlistment. The emperor was commander-in-chief, no levies could be raised without his consent, and every recruit swore allegiance to him according to a form which Augustus himself drew up. He engaged the soldier, paid him, dismissed him, and rewarded him. The soldier served sixteen years in the army and four in the reserve. After twenty years he could claim his discharge and a reward for faithful service.

Each legion was a standing corps with its own number and name. The legions formed the first line of defence, but behind them were the auxiliaries drawn from vassal States and frontier tribes. Each auxiliary regiment retained the name of the district where it was raised, so that it had a common bond, and in it the martial spirits found an outlet for their warlike energies. At the same time Augustus was careful to employ each regiment far from its native land, so that the soldiers became less provincial and thought of themselves as soldiers of the empire.

Of the fighting force Italy and the peaceful provinces saw little. Twelve legions lay on the northern frontier, four were in Syria, four in Egypt and Africa, three in Spain, two in

Dalmatia. In Rome itself there were a few picked regiments of guards, about 6,000 men in all.

Augustus developed something corresponding to a civil service in the empire. In former times the provinces had been granted out to favourites, who resided in them for a time, and returned home in a few years, loaded with wealth, mostly ill-gotten. Augustus changed this system. The governors were his officials, appointed by him, paid regular salaries by him, promoted by him, and dismissed by him. Moreover, from their decisions there was an appeal to him. Thus the proconsul was no longer an autocrat, but himself a subordinate officer. As the career might be a permanent one if the emperor so pleased, able men chose it and became experts in the art of government.

In Rome the same system was followed. Little by little all authority was vested in Augustus, and the various departments of home administration were worked by officials, responsible to him for all that they did. The corn and water supply, the care of public buildings, the police, the fire-brigade, became services worked by commissioners appointed by and responsible to the emperor.

It is greatly to Augustus' credit that he tried to encourage a healthy and vigorous municipal life throughout Italy, and sought to enlist the sympathies even of those who had not attained to the dignity of full citizenship. As time went on this class became less numerous, the rights of citizenship being more freely conferred.

Augustus regulated the finances of the empire with great care. They had become sadly disorganised, and by reason of civil war, mismanagement and peculation the empire was exhausted. He had a statistical survey of the empire taken, and taxation was based upon a carefully prepared census. The imperial budget may be said to date from the time of Augustus. He published the accounts of the empire annually, and left behind him a complete statement of the financial condition of the empire.

Augustus was a wise ruler. Yet, such are the limitations of human wisdom, during his reign Julius Cæsar was deified and there were temples and priests of Augustus. The worship of the emperor was encouraged as a bond of political union, and willingness to worship him became the test of patriotism. Many a Christian met his death in later times because he refused thus to blaspheme.

Augustus died at Nola at the age of seventy-five. He had ruled as autocrat for forty-one years, but in such manner as to gain the affections of all, nobles as well as plebs, provincials as well as Italians. Some years before his death he had adopted his step-son Tiberius, and later Tiberius had been made to some extent joint-ruler with himself. 14 A.D.

The emperor had ordered that a brief record of his acts should be inscribed upon bronze tablets and deposited in the mausoleum at Rome. The tablets have perished, but a copy of the epitaph cut on marble was found at Angora (Ancyra) in Galatia, in a temple dedicated to Augustus. The copy is still extant and is headed as follows: "Rerum gestarum divi Augusti, quibus orbem terrarum imperio populi Rom. subjecit et impensarum quas in rempublicam populumque Romanum fecit, incisarum in duabus aheneis pilis, quæ sunt Romæ positæ, exemplar subjectum".

CHAPTER II.

ROMAN LITERATURE—THE EARLY PERIOD.

THE Romans were not a literary people. This may seem a strange thing to say considering the position occupied by the Latin language in the literary world. For many centuries Latin was the language of culture. For many more Latin has been freely used for literature, and books are still written in the Latin tongue. But this is a different matter. As the Roman Empire spread Latin spread with it, until it was known not only throughout Italy, but over much of Europe. The old languages lived and were used for colloquial purposes, but men who wished their writings to be widely read wrote in Latin. This became even more the case when the Roman Church began to gain in power. Not only were the services of the Church read in Latin, but by writing in Latin theologians of different countries could interchange ideas. And over much of Europe for a long time the higher education was confined to theologians.

Latin gained its position more easily because of its intrinsic merits. It is an exact, business-like language. Its pronunciation and syntax are alike precise. If it is inferior to Greek in grace and elasticity, it is superior in vigour and force. Greek is a better language for philosophy, but Latin has a sonorous effectiveness all its own. Hence it has lived and will live.

Notwithstanding the merits of Latin it remains true that the Romans were not a literary people. In their early days, some would say in their best days, they had no literature worth talking about. For centuries they despised it and found little place for it in education. Their notion of education was very practical. If a boy could count, fight, plough the land,

and hold his own in a bargain, what more did he want? The Romans were in those days a practical and unimaginative race singularly unlike the Italian of to-day. At that time Roman literature consisted of historic annals, so bald and imperfect that they were of little use even to a historian, and of ballads and rude chants which have not lived.

The conquest of Southern Italy first made a difference. The cities there were of Greek origin, and the captives brought Greek ideas to Rome. Now the Greeks admired literature just as much as the Romans despised it. The palmy days of Greece were at an end, but her literary men and philosophers had left a store of intellectual food on which the Greeks feasted then and the world has feasted ever since. Philosophy, poetry, the drama, in all the Greeks excelled. Now captives were often well-educated men. In those days conquerors brought the best of the people with them as slaves, the clever men and the artisans. The others they left to till the land and send them tribute. Hence many well-bred and highly educated men were in Rome as slaves, not unfrequently better men than their masters.

Intelligent masters had the sense to use their slaves well. They gave them practical freedom, and allowed them to use their talents as they best could, perhaps receiving a percentage of their earnings. Thus it happened that the education of young Romans fell often into the hands of Greek slaves. It was not because the Romans thought any one good enough to be a schoolmaster, but because Greeks had been brought to Rome who knew much more about education than the Romans did and were qualified to teach them. These men taught the Greek language and used as their text-books the works of the Greek poets and dramatists just as the teachers in our English public schools and universities do to-day.

From Greece also came the drama. In Italian towns there had been play-acting of a simple sort from early times. But it did not amount to much and in Rome it was not encouraged. The Romans were a dignified race and hated to be made fun

of, and early acting was largely composed of rough fun and practical joking. The Greeks who were in Rome knew that stage plays could be made attractive, and tried to introduce them. At first the civic fathers were doubtful about it. An actor was to them pretty much what an actor was to our own forefathers, a mountebank, a man who lived on sufferance, and who might be thankful if he got away from the town without being put in the stocks. Nor was the play-writer much better in their opinion.

Nevertheless acting slowly won its way. To avoid giving offence the actors laid their scenes in Greek cities, and when they made fun they pretended that it was Greeks they were making fun of. Hence when the civic fathers came to censure they sometimes remained to laugh.

It was a long time before wholly Roman plays were acted with freedom. In fact, the time scarcely did come. The influence which Greek obtained in those early days was never wholly shaken off. The early Roman writers were largely translators and adapters from the Greek. Sometimes we have Latin thought in Greek form, and sometimes Greek thought in Latin form, but generally Greek somewhere. This was especially true of dramatists and poets. Virgil, the greatest of Roman poets, owed much to Homer, and Lucretius, Horace and Ovid owed much to Greece. The prose writers managed to emancipate themselves. Cicero, Julius Cæsar, Livy and Tacitus had styles of their own. But when Cicero began to write philosophy Greek influence became at once apparent.

In the space at our disposal we can only attempt to give brief biographical sketches of the leading Roman writers in the order in which they were born. Adequate quotation is impossible, else it would be interesting to watch the progress of poetry from the Saturnian jingle into which Andronicus translated the *Odyssey*, illustrated by the nursery rhyme,

> The King was in his counting-house, counting out his money;
> The Queen was in her parlour, eating bread and honey,

up to the majestic hexameters of Virgil. It would be interesting also to remember that Virgil at his best was only where Homer had been a thousand years before, and that Roman poetry having reached that climax quickly began to decay.

LIVIUS ANDRONICUS is spoken of as the first Roman dramatist. He was not a Roman, but a Greek, captured at Tarentum, and brought to Rome as a slave. He was freed by Livius, his master, and took his name. 290 B.C.

The earliest stage-plays (*ludi scenici*) had been introduced from Etruria about 364 B.C., but the first drama with a regular plot was translated from the Greek by Andronicus, and performed at Rome 240 B.C.

Fragments of the plays of Andronicus exist, and the fact that his writings were still being used as school-books in the reign of Augustus shows that the Romans considered them of merit.

CN. NÆVIUS was the first Roman poet of repute, apparently a most talented man. He was born in Campania, and served in the First Punic War. He at first translated dramas from the Greek, and continued to translate Greek comedies, but he endeavoured to clothe his tragedies in Roman garb. 264.

Nævius tried to introduce references to current events into his comedies, and criticised public affairs and men, in the fashion popular at Athens. But this did not answer at Rome, and Nævius was thrown into prison. He made his peace and was set free, but only to err again, and to be imprisoned again. At last he was exiled.

During his exile Nævius wrote an epic poem on the First Punic War. It was written in Saturnian metre and opened with the story of Æneas' flight from Troy. Only fragments remain, but the poem was utilised by two great men, Ennius and Virgil. Nævius' style was easy and free, and he had his admirers even in the Augustan age. One of his lines is still famous,

Laetus sum laudari me abste, pater, a laudato viro.

Nævius died at Utica.

254. T. MACCIUS PLAUTUS was the next writer in point of time, and the first whose works have come down to us on a large scale. He was an Umbrian by birth, and began life as a stage assistant. Then he took to acting, and then to playwriting. He was very successful in the last capacity, and continued to produce plays for forty years. Twenty of his comedies are extant, and they were still being performed in the time of Diocletian.

Like his predecessors, Plautus borrowed largely from the Greek. He made little claim to original authorship, but translated and edited, cleverly adapting his plays to Roman life and introducing Roman customs and jokes into his scenes. Warned perhaps by the fate of Nævius, he laid the scenes of his plays in Greek cities, and his characters were always Greek.

Plautus was a rough writer who wrote for bread, and sought only to amuse, but he was clever, and many writers, both ancient and modern, have been indebted to him. Amongst these may be mentioned Molière, Dryden and Shakespeare. The *Comedy of Errors* is founded on a play by Plautus called the *Menœchmi*.

250. Q. FABIUS PICTOR was perhaps the most ancient writer of Roman history in prose. He served in the Gallic War, and in the Second Punic War. His history, which was written in Greek, began with the arrival of Æneas in Italy, and brought Rome down to his own time.

239. Q. ENNIUS was a Calabrian by birth. He came to Rome from Sardinia in the train of M. Porcius Cato, who induced him to settle there. He made his living by teaching, and had a high reputation as a man of learning. He gave lessons in Greek and Latin, and endeavoured to bring the finest examples of Greek culture before his students, whilst also infusing into his work something of the practical Roman spirit.

Ennius' most important work was an epic poem called the *Annals*. The poem was modelled on Homer, and described the growth and glory of Rome. It was in eighteen books,

was half as long again as *Paradise Lost*, and must have been the labour of many years. The early part is legendary, the latter part deals with the Punic War and matters of which he had knowledge. From a historical point of view the *Annals* were not of much consequence, but from a literary point of view their importance was great. The metres previously used by poets had allowed much licence in quantities. But Ennius wrote in Homeric hexameters, and as these required a rigid observance of quantities, his writings, of which portions have been preserved, have had an important effect in fixing the laws of Latin pronunciation.

Ennius has the credit of having originated the satire. At that time the word had not its present meaning. The word Satura denoted a medley, and was applied to a rude kind of miscellaneous acting without any regular plot. Ennius applied it to his miscellaneous writings, short poems on different subjects and in different metres.

Ennius was a good man as well as a great genius. He was esteemed by his contemporaries. Scipio Africanus was an intimate friend, and when Ennius died he was buried in the sepulchre of the Scipios, and his bust was placed among the effigies of their family.

Cicero calls Ennius "Summus poeta noster," and Virgil copied him at times.

M. PORCIUS CATO, the well-known censor, is the first Latin prose author of whom we have much knowledge. He was born at Tusculum, and became famous as soldier, orator and author. He was a patriot of the narrowest school, loving no country but his own. 234.

Cato's vigorous style and biting wit gave him great force as a speaker, and his speeches were published. In the time of Cicero 150 of them were extant, and Cicero praises them highly. Quotations which have been preserved show that Cato had abundant vigour and some administrative talent of the domineering order.

Cato's whole literary activity belonged to the period of his old age. At that time his national prejudices had somewhat diminished, and he even went so far as to study Greek, which in his earlier years he had despised.

The books written by Cato were, as might be expected, of a practical order. A treatise on agriculture remains to us, modernised by the copyists, but sufficiently near the original to show his style.

Cato also wrote a book called *Origines*, of which only fragments have been preserved. It dealt with Roman and Italian antiquities in the early chapters, giving such account as could be given of the early history of Rome and the Italian tribes. The book derived its title from its early chapters, but it went on to describe later history, bringing it down to the very year of his death.

Latin historical composition in the proper sense began with Cato, the *Origines* being the oldest historical work written in Latin, and the first important prose work in Roman literature.

220. M. PACUVIUS, the nephew of Ennius, was born at Brindisi just before the Second Punic War. He lived to be an old man, and witnessed during his life the stirring events which ended with the destruction of Carthage.

Pacuvius was considered by many ancient writers one of the greatest of the Latin tragic poets. His tragedies were mostly based upon the Greek writers, but he treated his subjects with much originality. Some of his tragedies were taken from Roman story, such as the one entitled *Paulus*.

Pacuvius' verses were popular in the time of Julius Cæsar, and though only fragments remain, we can see that he was a man of lofty thought and high ideal. He was distinguished as a painter as well as a poet.

Q. CÆCILIUS STATIUS was a native of Milan, and a writer of comedy. The date of his birth is uncertain, but he was the immediate predecessor of Terence. Some critics have placed him with Plautus and Terence in the first rank of comic poets,

but he was probably inferior to both. The titles of forty of his dramas are known, but only fragments have been preserved.

P. TERENTIUS AFER (TERENCE) was born at Carthage and 196.
brought in his early youth as a slave to Rome. His master, a Roman senator, impressed by his talents, educated and freed him. Thus by his master's kindness he was brought early into contact with education and refinement, and acquired the elegant manner which characterises his work.

The *Andriâ*, Terence's first play, was acted 166 B.C., and at once made him famous. Like other writers he borrowed largely from the Greek, nor did he attempt to clothe Athenian comedy in Roman garb as they had done. He wrote in the Latin language, but as an Athenian, and refrained from Roman customs and local references.

Terence's plays may not be intrinsically more moral than the rest, but he avoided coarseness, and though this injured his popularity with the plebs, it made his plays agreeable to persons of taste.

Terence died at the early age of thirty-six years. Six comedies remain to us, perhaps all that he produced. His style is polished, and his plays are marked by a purity of idiom which has received from critics the highest praise. It has even been said that, although a foreigner and a freedman, Terence divided with Cicero and Cæsar the palm of pure Latinity.

L. ACCIUS was a prolific writer of tragedy and history. Of 170.
his tragedies mere fragments remain, but these bear evidence of unusual power and of a moral impressiveness not always present in the Roman drama.

Accius also wrote Annals in verse, containing a history of Rome and a history of poetry. These writings are not extant.

The works of Accius are spoken of with admiration by ancient writers. He lived to a great age, and Cicero, when a young man, frequently conversed with him.

168. G. LUCILIUS of Aurunca was a fluent and popular writer of satirical poetry. Ennius has the credit of having invented the Satura or medley, but Lucilius moulded it into shape. His satires were in thirty books. Of these 800 fragments have been preserved. Though the fragments are of the briefest they show undoubted power.

The style of Lucilius was vigorous and pungent, sometimes coarse enough and unsparingly frank, but abounding in caustic pleasantry and clever criticism of life. He had none of the polish of Terence, and Horace declared that if the order of his words was altered no one could tell that he was not reading prose. Nevertheless his writings lived, and were popular even in the Augustan age.

CHAPTER III.

ROMAN LITERATURE—THE TIME OF CICERO.

M. TERENTIUS VARRO was a laborious student, a man of wide learning and a voluminous author. Unfortunately, he took to politics, and fought against Julius Cæsar. After Pharsalia, Cæsar forgave him, and employed him in connection with a scheme he had on foot for establishing a great public library in Rome. 116 B.C.

When Cæsar was murdered Varro went into seclusion, and gave himself wholly to literary work. His name was on the list of those proscribed by the triumvirs, but he escaped and remained for some time in concealment. Afterwards Octavius protected him, and he lived to a good old age, spending his life at his favourite studies.

Varro composed a mass of literature, of which, unfortunately, little has been preserved. His poetry was of the satirical order, his prose writings dealt with a variety of subjects.

Varro's great work was the *Antiquities*. The work was divided into two sections, Things Human, and Things Divine. Only fragments have come down to us, but many quotations from the latter section are to be found in the works of the early Christian fathers. Augustine drew largely from this source in his *City of God*.

Varro wrote an important treatise on agriculture when he was eighty years of age. Of this treatise three books are extant. There are also extant six books, a portion of a treatise on the Latin language. The book contains much curious information, but testifies "to the infantine state of philological science at the time".

There is a refreshing element of common sense in Varro's

writing. He advises girls to keep at their needlework and not put off the child's dress too early; and he advises that boys should not be taken to gladiatorial games, where the heart is hardened and cruelty quickly learned.

106. M. TULLIUS CICERO was born at Arpinum in Southern Latium, and was educated at Rome. His father was in easy circumstances, and Marcus received instruction from the best teachers in the capital. He was an insatiable student, plunging "into every kind of study".

During the Social War Cicero served in two campaigns, but he had little fancy for soldiering. He would have been a better man had he kept out of politics altogether. But this would not have been in accordance with the spirit of the age. When we forget the man and remember only the writer, Cicero must receive the highest praise. He is in a class by himself. In his prose works the Latin language is seen in its perfection. Of modern classical Latin prose he may fitly be called the creator.

At the age of twenty-six Cicero was already a successful pleader in the law courts. Either his health broke down or he dreaded the enmity of Sulla, so he left Rome, and spent two years in travel. During these years he visited Athens and Rhodes, and took the opportunity of extending his knowledge of philosophy and rhetoric. He returned from his tour strengthened and matured, and was soon recognised as the foremost of Roman orators. From this time he was constantly engaged in the law courts and assemblies. Of the speeches which he delivered, fifty-seven have come down to us. They were carefully edited before publication in all probability, and some never were delivered at all, but they bear every sign of first-class oratorical ability.

Sometimes Cicero was counsel for the prosecution, and several speeches demonstrate his power of invective. But, generally, he was retained for the defence, and when two or three counsel were engaged he spoke last, as being the one most likely to leave a favourable impression on the jury.

Cicero's political speeches were mostly delivered in the Senate amongst men of his own class. But he could also address popular audiences with power. The Roman law courts were not infrequently held in the open air, and interesting trials drew large crowds.

The letters of Cicero are not less interesting than his speeches. There are about eight hundred of these, and they have high importance as a chronicle of the history of the time. They are the more valuable as many of them, perhaps the greater number, were written without thought of publication. Naturally they vary in character. Some are formal, some frank, some are intended to conceal by ambiguous language the real views of the writer. Some are written with care, some have been dashed off hurriedly. On the whole, Cicero's letters do not lead us to admire his character as a statesman or even as a citizen. But with this we are not at present concerned. The subject has already been dealt with in our history. As a writer, Cicero's style is excellent, and his letters form a valuable commentary upon the closing years of the republic.

When Cicero's political popularity waned he devoted himself more entirely to literature, and produced many important works.

De Oratore is a treatise on public speaking thrown into the form of a discussion between famous orators. The attainments needed by an orator, the most effective arguments that an orator can employ, the value of delivery and action in oratory are all dealt with. In this treatise Cicero appears at his best. He was dealing with a subject which he understood, and his characters carry on the discussion with grace and dignity.

Cicero also wrote on philosophy. The subject was not congenial, but he produced a treatise, *De Republica.* The treatise was lost, but in 1822 portions of it were discovered in a Vatican palimpsest. In his philosophical writings Cicero borrowed largely from the Greek. His philosophy when original is superficial.

De Legibus deals with the origin and nature of law, and has

suggestions for a model code. The treatise is sketchy and incomplete, but gives valuable information. The task was interrupted by his departure from Rome as governor of Cilicia, and it was not resumed.

When Cicero returned to Rome the Civil War interfered with his literary labours, but in 47 B.C. he once more settled down to his work. In the *Brutus*, written 46 B.C., he sketches the history of eloquence at Rome, and in a subsequent treatise gives his views of what an orator ought to be. Cicero's rhetorical works are valuable; the prose is finished and artistic; the subject is handled by one who understood it well.

Cicero's only daughter, Tullia, died in 45 B.C. She was greatly beloved, and the influence of her death appears in his later works. *Consolatio* was the first of these, and it was followed by *Hortensius*, a work in which St. Augustine found much inspiration. These were followed by philosophical treatises of a more speculative character. Of these *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* is the most important. It deals with the supreme good, the end towards which man should direct his actions and thoughts. In this book the philosophy of the Stoics, Epicureans and Peripatetics is discussed.

Some of Cicero's writings were religious in character. Of such was *De Natura Deorum*. In this book also the theories of the philosophical sects are criticised. *De Divinatione*, a work on revelation, followed, and *De Fato*, a treatise of which only a fragment remains.

Cicero also wrote *De Senectute*, to show how old age may be most comfortably borne, and *De Amicitia*, on friendship. His last work was *De Officiis*, a book written for the benefit of his son Marcus, then studying philosophy at Athens. It forms a systematic manual of moral duty.

In the year 43 B.C. Cicero was proscribed by the triumvirs, Antony, Lepidus and Octavius. He fled, but was chased, and rather than allow his servants to risk their lives by fighting for him he offered his neck to the executioner. He had then only reached his sixty-fourth year, and but for this brutal deed

might have done much good work in the world in the evening of life.

Cicero lived in trying times and tried to play too many parts. Had he kept more strictly to his proper *rôle* it would have been better for him and better for the great audience which his writings still reach. But as an author Cicero must have high praise. Under circumstances at times the most depressing he produced a great amount of literary work, not always original, but for the most part elevating in tone, and clear and rich in style. His writings marked an epoch in the Latin composition of his own time, and have been valuable instruments for twenty centuries in the hands of those who have aimed at the highest culture of the intelligence.

C. JULIUS CÆSAR, the greatest hero of Roman history, was 100.
a contemporary of Cicero and only a few years his junior. With his political life we have dealt in our former volume; here we have only to speak of his literary powers.

Cæsar was an orator of merit, his speeches were praised by Cicero, and some were extant centuries after his death, though none have come down to our own time. He is said to have had a brilliant, high-bred style.

Cæsar was the author of several works besides those with which his name is generally associated, but only traces of them remain. His literary merits are known to us chiefly through his *Commentaries*, namely, on the Gallic and on the Civil Wars.

The commentaries on the Gallic Wars were written with a purpose. Cæsar had added huge districts to the Roman Empire, and in so doing had gathered together a powerful army devoted to his interests. In his *Commentaries* he shows how all this was forced upon him by circumstances beyond his control. Regarding the reasonableness of his views opinions may differ. Naturally Cæsar puts everything in the best light for himself, but the tone is so bright and candid that we do not seem to be reading the narrative of a partisan.

Cæsar was not a historian in the ordinary sense. There was in his writing no sign of careful research, or balancing of opinion, or even of strict adherence to truth. He had, as we have said, a purpose to serve. His aim was autobiographical rather than historical. But he tells his story with such freshness and vigour that he has left in his autobiography a valuable record of political events. As a writer of Latin prose he stands second only to Cicero.

100. L. AFRANIUS was a popular writer of comedies in the time of Cæsar. His comedies described Roman scenes and manners in humble life, and some of them are far from refined. They may, however, be none the less accurate.

Afranius was a man of good family and an orator, so that he wrote as an amateur. We have the names and fragments of more than twenty of his comedies.

Comedies describing Roman scenes were called *comœdiæ togatæ*, those describing Greek scenes were *comœdiæ palliatæ*, those which, like the comedies of Afranius, described humble life were called *comœdiæ tabernariæ*.

99. T. LUCRETIUS CARUS was the didactic poet of Rome. He has even been spoken of as the greatest of Roman poets, but this place belongs to Virgil. Lucretius had a peculiar genius, a power of discussing abstruse matter in majestic verse, and of dealing with subjects usually considered dry and forbidding in a charming style. His work combines purity of style with depth of reasoning in a way unapproached by any other Latin poet.

Lucretius was a Roman of good family and fortune, who despised the mundane ambitions of his time and gave himself to literature and philosophy. He has been called "the aristocrat with a mission". The study of the Greek philosophers and poets was the absorbing passion of his life. But he was no copyist: both as philosopher and poet he was an original genius.

The work which has immortalised the name of Lucretius

is entitled *De Rerum Natura*. It is a philosophical work written in hexameters, explaining the most abstruse speculations in majestic verse, and with occasional digressions of singular beauty. The poem expounds the leading principles of Epicurean philosophy, which was itself based upon the yet earlier philosophy of Democritus.

This school of philosophers taught what we would now speak of as the survival of the fittest. The world was a concourse of atoms which had come together by chance and would eventually separate and continue their race through void. Much scientific teaching of the present day is on the same lines, and Lucretius in his writings anticipates new discoveries, both in chemistry and physics, in a remarkable way.

Unfortunately the psychology of Lucretius is also materialistic. The soul and mind consist of atoms, and the soul is not immortal. The atoms of the soul are scattered at death, after which there can be no sensation, therefore men have nothing to fear. The victims of passion and vice have their hell in this life.

In the Lucretian system the place of the gods was taken by Nature, an omnipotent and omnipresent force, governing the universe by fixed laws. Lucretius discusses many other subjects in his poem. He is often wrong, but he is sometimes right, and he is always great. And the student rises from a comparison of these old-world theories with the theories of the advanced scientific men of our own day with the conviction deepened that "there is no new thing under the sun".

In his own day the writings of Lucretius did not meet with much appreciation. Nor is it to be wondered at. He vehemently attacked the superstitions of his time, but he had nothing to give in their place, for the materialism which he preached could not satisfy the heart of man. Virgil, however, afterwards did homage to his genius, with true poetic feeling declaring his own inferiority.

Lucretius died at the early age of forty-four and left his poem unfinished, so that it was given to the world in its completed form by some other hand.

86. C. SALLUSTIUS CRISPUS (SALLUST) was born in the Sabine hills and was a historian of merit. He quarrelled with Cicero and was expelled from the Senate. In the Civil War he was fortunate enough to take the side of Cæsar. He was rewarded with the government of Numidia, and returned to Rome from his province a wealthy man.

Sallust was the first Roman historian to emancipate himself from the habit of writing history in chronicle form. He tried instead to imitate the style of such writers as Thucydides. He was, however, too intense a partisan to be reliable, and he has the habit of putting speeches of his own composition into the mouths of his heroes. The two works which have come down to us, accounts of the Catiline conspiracy and the Jugurthan War, are really political pamphlets.

Nevertheless, the style of Sallust's writings was original, and they are valuable from a literary point of view. Sallust avoided the stately smoothness of Ciceronian Latin: his style is abrupt, almost jerky. We may perhaps say that whilst Cicero gave us Latin in its beauty, Sallust gives it in a terse and concentrated form.

84. C. VALERIUS CATULLUS was born at Verona in Cisalpine Gaul. He was a talented poet, belonging to a new Roman school of poets, which modelled itself upon the Greek fashionable poetry.

The poems of Catullus are of the lyric and elegiac order, and in various styles and metres. Amongst them are many love poems, some coarse, but all clever. In some of his pieces Catullus rivals Horace. The *Atys* is one of the most remarkable of his poems. It is full of poetic fire and has a rhythm used also by Lord Tennyson in "Boadicea".

Catullus died at an early age, else he would have reached the first rank of Roman poets.

CHAPTER IV.

ROMAN LITERATURE—THE AUGUSTAN AGE.

WITH Augustus the republic ended and the empire began. The establishment of the empire not only marked an era in political life, but also an era in literature. With an autocrat upon the throne, benevolent indeed, but determined to order all things according to his will, the free form of political life ceased, and much literary freedom ceased with it. The government could not be attacked, not even criticised, it must only be praised. Pamphleteering was now dangerous and oratory lost much of its force. To harangue a public audience was little short of treason, nor was there much scope for oratory in a Senate which only met to register the emperor's decrees.

Historical writing becomes less easy under a despotism. The history of the past can be freely recorded up to a certain point, the point when the despot or his ancestors begin to take a personal interest in it. After that the historian must walk warily, even with regard to the history of past reigns. As for the history of his own day, that if touched at all can only be touched in the interests of the reigning monarch.

In the Roman Empire the change that had come over the literary world was not at once felt. The best men of Augustus' reign had lived under the republic, some of them had even served against him. Moreover, Augustus was a peculiarly able and broad-minded man. He made one terrible mistake in connecting himself with the proscription and hounding Cicero to death, but he soon gathered sense. Realising the power of literature in the world he encouraged literary men, and took them under his patronage. Mæcenas, his chief minister,

though an indifferent writer was an excellent critic, and surrounded himself with the choicest literary spirits of his day. Literature, therefore, flourished, but only on certain lines. The literary man who becomes a courtier has to pay as the price the loss of his independence. Augustus and Mæcenas were gracious to literary men, but it was understood that they must keep their hands off public affairs, or if they spoke of the emperor, must speak in flattering tones and with bated breath.

For a time things went well enough. The Augustan age was undoubtedly extremely brilliant. It was something to have men like Virgil, and Horace, and Livy, and Ovid, almost contemporaneous. Augustus himself was fond of books. He founded libraries, and dabbled in prose and verse. It was indeed part of his policy to create a literature, to bring clever men forward, and to use them in his service. So long, in fact, as the despot was a literary man, though the nature of the writing might change, yet there would be plenty of it. But when Augustus passed away, and the despot was only a despot, things became very different. This was what really happened. During the reign of Tiberius there was a lull, then some literary activity for a time, but it soon became clear that the golden age had passed. Men were afraid to write freely, there was little to inspire them in any case, and genius shrank within itself.

70 B.C. P. VERGILIUS MARO (VIRGIL) was the greatest of Roman poets. He was born at Andes, near Mantua, and was carefully educated. Too delicate to be a soldier, and too shy to be an advocate, he devoted himself to study. His parents were humble though independent, and they educated him as well as could be done. He was for some years at school at Cremona, and then went to Rome to study philosophy, rhetoric, and the like. In the rhetoric class Octavius, afterwards emperor, was a fellow student.

Virgil owed his early recognition as a poet to that which

seemed at the time a great misfortune. His father's farm was 41.
confiscated by the officers of Augustus, and awarded to one of the emperor's veterans. The confiscation was unjust, and Virgil had the courage, using what little influence he had, to apply for restitution. The Governor of Cisalpine Gaul took an interest in the case, and used influence with Mæcenas, Augustus' chief minister, through whom Virgil recovered the property. His first Eclogue was written to express gratitude to Cæsar for his kindness. Unfortunately a year or two later the injustice was repeated, and Virgil's life was in danger. He again appealed, and this time he did not recover the ancestral farm, but another was given to him in its stead.

The *Eclogues* or *Bucolics* were Virgil's earliest work. They are written in a simple, natural way, and are excellent examples of polished versification.

The *Georgics*, an agricultural poem in four books, are dedicated to Mæcenas, who had taken Virgil under his patronage. Perhaps the subject was suggested by him. They deal with the various duties of a farmer, agriculture, planting of trees, care of live stock, treatment of bees, and the like. The *Georgics* were published in complete form about 30 B.C.

After publishing the *Georgics* the greater part of Virgil's life was occupied in writing the *Æneid*. This epic poem constructed on Homeric lines, begins with the supposed wanderings of Æneas after the fall of Troy, and skilfully throws upon the screen lovely and majestic word pictures of Rome's ancient glory. In the poem, legend, history and philosophy are skilfully interwoven. In the sixth book, the hero visits the abode of the dead, sees the place of torment of the wicked, and the plains of Paradise. From this book sprang Dante's great works, the *Inferno* and the *Paradiso*. He made Virgil his model, and owned him master.

Virgil died about the age of fifty, leaving his great poem unfinished and unrevised. So impressed was he with its imperfections that he left instructions in his will that the poem should be destroyed. Fortunately, Augustus heard of it, and

ordered that this should not be done, but that the poem should be published as he had left it.

Critics have not been slow to accuse Virgil of lack of originality, and undoubtedly he drank deeply at the well of Homer, just as Dante drank deeply at the well of Virgil. Perhaps even Homer drank deeply at some other well, for recent explorations make it clear that Homer himself did not stand at the threshold of Greek civilisation. Originality is hard to find. Few men have been able to do more than improve slightly upon work done by their predecessors. Even so with Virgil. A delicate, retiring man of culture, he gathered up much that was rich and beautiful, and handed it down to posterity in a new and more perfect form. His poem stands after the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the third great epic poem of antiquity.

Virgil's poetic genius was recognised early, and his works were used as school-books in Rome for centuries after his death. He was a pure-minded and elevated writer, and he used the Latin language with consummate skill. With Cicero in prose, with Virgil in poetry, we have Latin at its best.

65. Q. HORATIUS FLACCUS (HORACE), was Virgil's personal friend, and has been, in his own way, almost equally famous. Like Virgil, he came of humble parentage, and owed almost everything to the care bestowed upon his education by his parents. His father had been a slave, but was freed before his son's birth, and became a tax-collector. He educated his son Horace at Rome and Athens.

With other young men living in Athens at the time he joined the army of Brutus, and was beaten with the rest at Philippi. After the battle he sued for pardon, and was permitted to return to Rome. There he lived in a humble way for a time, but his poetry attracting attention, he became acquainted with Virgil, who introduced him to Mæcenas. Mæcenas treated him with kindness, and presented him with a small estate on the Sabine hills, not far from Tibur. On this property Horace lived in comfort, taking great delight in it.

The *Satires* were the earliest published writings of Horace. The word in those days signified a mixture or medley. Some of the words were satirical in the modern sense, but many were not. The *Satires* show much keenness of observation and facility of expression.

The *Odes* came next in order of time, and are Horace's greatest monument. Sometimes they are written in lighter strain, sometimes with serious purpose. Everywhere there is beauty of form and language, and the master's touch. Nettleship has said: "In lyric poetry Horace represents, as Virgil does in epic, the highest ideas which the national life of the Roman Empire was capable of inspiring".

The *Epistles* came last. In these Roman society is depicted by the man of the world with genial criticism, practical philosophy and exquisite grace. Some have said that in this particular form of composition, Horace has never been equalled.

Like Virgil, Horace was fortunate in obtaining early appreciation. His writings were soon widely known and widely studied. Mæcenas and Augustus treated him kindly, and, though he retained an independent spirit, he remained on good terms with his patrons. Munro, the well-known critic, in comparing Virgil with Horace, beautifully says, that whilst Virgil was imitated by many subsequent writers of epic poetry, "the moulds in which Horace cast his lyrical and his satirical thoughts were broken at his death".

59. TITUS LIVIUS (LIVY) was born at Padua, and was for a time a teacher of rhetoric in his native city. He came to Rome when about twenty-eight years of age, studied rhetoric, and wrote philosophy. He made the acquaintance of Augustus, and being an able man, holding no extreme views, he kept on good terms with men of all parties.

Soon after the foundation of the empire Livy began his great work, *The History of Rome*. The work was designed on an ambitious scale. It was to have contained 150 books,

and to have narrated the history of the city from its foundation to his own time. Livy died before the work was completed, but he had brought his subject down to the death of Drusus, 9 B.C. In all he had written 142 books, of which, unfortunately, only thirty-five have been preserved, Books I.-X. and XXI.-XLV. There are extant, however, short epitomes of most of the lost books.

Livy was far from reliable as a historian. Not that he was dishonest, but his methods were unsatisfactory. His chronology was often inaccurate, his geography at fault. He had been educated in a very broad sense, he had little knowledge of law, political economy, political science, or philosophy. His reflections are rarely profound. He merely aimed at producing a readable narrative, but this he did to perfection. His style is extremely good. His prose has been spoken of even by great critics as unrivalled, and though this praise is too high, there can be no question concerning its merits.

Livy's writing flows on in a calm, strong current, and even when he is transparently inaccurate he is effective. He did not mean to be inaccurate. He was a fair, liberal-minded man in many ways. But he was ultra-patriotic; he could see little else in the world but Rome. Moreover, it was ancient Rome that chiefly attracted him; the Rome of his own day he counted sadly degenerate. Perhaps he was not far wrong. He accepted the change which the empire had brought as a necessity, but he loved it not.

Judging Livy as a historian he had many faults, but as a literary man he takes high rank. In the writing of pure Latin prose Cicero and Cæsar were his only rivals.

54. ALBIUS TIBULLUS was an elegiac poet some of whose writings remain extant. He seems to have been an amiable, unselfish man, and his poems are delicate and refined. Many of his songs were inspired by the tender passion: his first elegies are addressed to Delia, later songs to others. Horace was warmly attached to him, and does homage to the purity

of style which characterised his poetry. Quintilian, a celebrated Roman rhetorician and critic, speaks of him as the most polished and elegant of Roman elegiac poets.

SEXTUS PROPERTIUS, a poet of Umbria, and a man of con- 49.
siderable learning, also wrote passionate love songs. His first elegies are addressed to Cynthia, for whom he had a fervent attachment. The attachment was unhappy enough, but, under its influence, Propertius wrote his best poetry. He, also, was one of the circle of literary men who surrounded Mæcenas.

Propertius had weak health, and partly for this reason, partly because the connection with Cynthia was broken off, he latterly wrote but little. Probably he died young.

PUBLIUS OVIDIUS NASO (OVID) was born in central Italy, 43.
and came to Rome at an early age. His father desired that he should be an advocate and have an official career, so he had him trained in rhetoric and law. Ovid even entered the profession and held some minor appointments. But he was devoted to versification, and soon laid his profession aside for the sake of poetry.

Of the great Augustan poets Ovid is the only one whose career entirely belongs to that age. He was born the year after Julius Cæsar was murdered, and died three years after the death of Augustus.

Ovid's poetry, until he was about forty years of age, was chiefly on amatory subjects. It was often extremely immoral, but it suited the tone of society, and Ovid was quickly installed as the fashionable poet. His genius cannot be questioned, but much of his work was frivolous, and some of it was unscrupulously demoralising.

During the last ten years of his life Ovid wrote books of a worthier character. Among these the *Metamorphoses* gave, in fifteen books, legends and fables describing transformations from the creation down to Julius Cæsar, who was transformed into a star. Ovid also wrote a poem called the *Fasti*, a poetical handling of the Roman calendar, describing the events

which each day commemorated. It might have been more interesting had there been any serious purpose inspiring it. As it is its chief interest lies in the fact that it throws light upon certain out-of-the-way rites and customs.

When Ovid was fifty-two years of age he was banished by Augustus to Tomi, a town of Thrace, near the mouth of the Danube on the very borders of the empire. The reason of this drastic banishment is disputed, but doubtless it was well deserved. Probably Ovid had been guilty of some greater indiscretion than usual. Augustus was making an effort to improve the morals of Roman society and Ovid was doing his best to corrupt them.

The citizens of Tomi received Ovid with more kindness than he deserved, but it was a sore change from the gay life of the capital to this wretched and joyless town for a man like Ovid. He wrote many elegies bemoaning his fate and pleading for permission to return, but Augustus would neither recall him nor permit him to change his place of exile.

In 14 A.D. Augustus died and was succeeded by Tiberius. Three years later Ovid also died at Tomi, the last great poet of the Augustan era.

We shall return to our sketch of Roman literature in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER V.

TIBERIUS.

AUGUSTUS had been first married to Clodia. His second wife was Scribonia, who bore him his daughter Julia. He divorced Scribonia and married a third wife, Livia, the wife of Tiberius Claudius Nero, a Roman noble. Livia had borne two sons to her former husband, Tiberius and Drusus, who thus became stepsons of Augustus. Drusus died in his prime. He was father of Germanicus and Claudius, the latter of whom became an emperor late in life.

Augustus having no son of his own made many plans for the succession, but outlived most whom he had chosen. First he chose Marcellus, son of his sister Octavia, but he died at the age of nineteen. Then he favoured his stepsons, Tiberius and Drusus. Afterwards he preferred Lucius and Gaius Cæsar, the sons of Julia by her second husband Agrippa. When they died, Drusus being also dead, he had no one in the royal house whose claims could compete with those of Tiberius. Accordingly Tiberius was adopted as his son, and invested with the imperium and tribunician power. Afterwards he was authorised to take the census and to administer the provinces along with Augustus. It was, therefore, a matter of course that he should succeed him, and he did so with universal consent.

It is never easy to succeed a popular man. Augustus 14 A.D.
became emperor whilst still a youth; he was a hero, he had many popular gifts. When Tiberius became emperor he was fifty-five years of age, and his life had been far from a happy one. Augustus had used him freely and treated him badly. Whilst still young he had compelled him to divorce his wife,

Vispania Agrippina, to whom he was devoted, and to marry his daughter Julia, the widow of Agrippa. There was no happiness in the union, for, apart from other things, Julia was a worthless woman.

Though Augustus had thus spoiled the life of his stepson he showed him little favour and would have robbed him of the succession in the end had there been any other who could have been pushed forward. Little wonder if Tiberius became soured and cynical.

The historians of the period were bitterly hostile to Tiberius, and dealt unfairly with his memory. They exaggerated his faults, misinterpreted his motives, and retailed silly and malicious rumours about his actions.

He was a hypocrite, they say, because he affected reluctance in assuming the imperial power. But all we know of the after life of Tiberius strengthens the impression that this reluctance was not feigned. Had the imperial power come ten or twenty years earlier it might well have gratified him. But he was now past his prime; he had been acting with Augustus for years; he knew the difficulties and dangers surrounding the imperial position, and the thanklessness of the task; he knew that he lacked the gifts that made Augustus popular; he disliked the senators and he despised the plebs; why then should he increase his responsibilities and make his life one long misery?

When Tiberius went to live at Capri the historians could only suppose that he did it for the sake of indulging in licentiousness unchecked. The bare mention of the matter is sufficient to show its absurdity. Why should a man leave the most wicked city in the world and go to live in a small island with a few villa residences for the sake of debauchery? Surely there was enough opportunity for that in Rome. Tiberius left Rome because he was weary of the city, weary of the intrigues of the place, weary of his unhappy domestic life. He longed for peace; he found it in Capri and he never returned to Rome. His absence from Rome increased his unpopularity.

The capital of an empire does not love an absentee monarch, and the hand of Sejanus, whom he made governor, was heavy upon the senators. But Rome had to learn how little, after all, residence within her walls had to do with the government of the empire. The provinces were Tiberius' chief concern. He had to think not only of one huge disreputable city, but of a great part of Europe, Asia and Africa. In the restfulness of Capri Tiberius could receive his couriers from the distant provinces and issue his instructions to his governors in the ends of the earth just as easily as he could have done amidst the distracting and evil influences of Rome. Nor is there any reason to believe that this first duty was neglected. The empire was well governed by Tiberius. But Rome missed the glitter and the show.

The death of Augustus was made the opportunity for mutiny amongst the troops on the Danube and on the Rhine. The soldiers complained of their poor pay and long term of service. The mutiny on the Danube was quelled by Drusus, the son of Tiberius, with the aid of an opportune lunar eclipse.

The mutiny on the Rhine was more serious. Germanicus, the nephew of Tiberius, son of his favourite brother Drusus, and his own adopted son, was general on the Rhine. He was exceedingly popular, and the soldiers offered to make him emperor if he would lead them to Rome. Germanicus resisted firmly; he was loyal to his uncle, and at last the soldiers listened to his remonstrances.

In connection with the mutiny on the Rhine we first hear of Caligula (Bootikin), who was destined to succeed Tiberius. His name was Gaius and he was the youngest son of Germanicus. He was at that time in the camp with his mother Agrippina and was a great pet amongst the soldiers, who gave him his nickname, probably from the way that he strutted about the camp in his little military boots. The sight of Agrippina, pretending to carry Bootikin away from the camp to a place of safety, moved the hearts of the rough men and

brought them to their senses. Their nickname has never been forgotten.

During the next three years Germanicus was constantly at war with the Germans. He crossed the Rhine, devastated their lands and fought several campaigns. The German leader was Arminius (Hermann). This hero had done his country much service. It was he who, during the reign of Augustus, defeated Varus and destroyed his legions. Germanicus was more careful than Varus had been, and did not meet with so grave a disaster, though at times his troops were in great danger. The Germans were often defeated, but the Romans lost heavily and could obtain no permanent grip of the country. At last, perceiving that the results bore no proportion to the
17. expenditure of blood and treasure involved, Tiberius recalled Germanicus and determined, as Augustus had done before him, to accept the Rhine as the boundary of the empire.

Arminius died at the early age of thirty-seven. He is rightly held in high esteem by his countrymen and regarded as a great national hero, the deliverer of Germany.

Germanicus was now sent to the East to settle disputes with the Armenians and Parthians. About the same time Cn. Calpurnius Piso, a somewhat overbearing aristocrat, was made Governor of Syria. Germanicus succeeded with his mission, but fell out with Piso, and relations became so strained that Piso left his province. Just then Germanicus fell ill and died. On his deathbed he declared his belief that he had been poisoned by Piso's instigation. It is most improbable, nevertheless such was the popularity of Germanicus at Rome that when Piso returned he had to stand his trial before the Senate. He had few friends, for the emperor, who did not believe the story of the poisoning, was yet angry with Piso for having exceeded his duty as governor in various ways. Whilst the trial was in progress he was found dead with his throat cut and his sword beside him. Of course there were many to declare that an evil conscience had led him to make away with himself; others said that he had been

killed by order of Tiberius, who was also responsible for the death of Germanicus. Unfortunately, the death of an accused person was no unusual event at Rome. It solved many difficulties. However it may have happened, it may be looked upon as certain that Tiberius had nothing to do with either death.

Though the reign of Tiberius was exempt from serious wars, there were uprisings in Africa, Gaul, and Thrace. In Southern Italy there were slave revolts. At Rome the steady increase in the slave population, the decrease in the free-born population, and the degradation of such freemen as remained were becoming a cause of alarm to thoughtful men.

In a former chapter we have seen how carefully Augustus preserved republican forms even when the substance had passed away. Though all real power had been taken from the people, Augustus let them play at electing magistrates and passing laws. Under Tiberius this pretence of authority was taken away. Legislation was now carried out by Senatus Consulta and by Imperial Rescript. With neither had the plebs anything to do. The election of magistrates was also taken out of their hands. The emperor nominated the candidate, the Senate approved, the people had the barren right to acclaim.

In thus even apparently worsening the legal status of the plebs Tiberius risked popularity. But the circumstances amply justified his action. The Roman populace had been ruined by conquest and the slavery that follows it. The nobles had their money and their pride and lived apart. Rome was crowded with slaves who not only performed all the manual labour, but were the tradesmen and shopkeepers of the city. Slave labour and free labour cannot exist side by side, and the humbler freemen had degenerated into loafers, living upon the taxes. Augustus fed the rabble, amused them with games, and let them believe that he was consulting them about the government. Tiberius continued to feed them. From this for the moment there seemed to be no escape. But

he did not trouble to amuse them, and he no longer pretended to consult them about the government.

Tiberius established a permanent prefecture of the city of Rome, maintaining the dignity of the office by restricting it to senators of consular rank. He appointed Sejanus as prætorian prefect, a dashing cavalry officer for whom he had a great fancy. Tiberius, acting probably under the advice of Sejanus, also caused a permanent camp to be built for the guards outside the walls. It was in front of the Porta Viminalis, and the nine cohorts which had charge of the city were all stationed there. It was convenient to have the soldiers thus apart from the people, but it was dangerous. Living together their interests became concentrated, and they were more conscious of their power. The time would come when the prætorian guards would set up and pull down emperors.

The emperor paid careful attention to finance. Augustus had spent money somewhat freely, especially in Rome. The games had been well supported, the temples had been restored, the city had been adorned with public buildings. It was said of Augustus that he found Rome brick and left it marble. Tiberius curtailed all these unproductive forms of expenditure. Thus he was able to lighten taxation, and even to remit it at times.

33. At a time of serious financial crisis Tiberius came to the rescue and saved the national credit. When an earthquake in Asia laid famous cities in ruins, he sent princely gifts and remitted tribute for five years. When there was a disastrous
36. fire on the Aventine and terrible suffering ensued, Tiberius gave three-quarters of a million for the relief of the sufferers. Yet such was his careful administration and the effect of peace upon the empire that he never found it necessary to raise taxation, and when he died he left the exchequer full.

During the reign of Tiberius the law of treason was widened. In earlier times, treason was a name only applied to offences against the commonwealth, now it was made to include

offences against the emperor. An insult to the emperor, whether in speech or writing, was an offence against the State. This is really the modern view of treason as held in Germany at the present time. It is logical, flowing naturally from the imperial system. But it is open, under certain circumstances, to great abuse, and it was greatly abused at Rome.

Worse than the extension of the law of treason was the encouragement given to public informers, *delatores* as they were called. Augustus began the mischief by offering rewards to any who lodged information against violators of his marriage laws. It was not an easy matter to get information on the subject, and, as there was no public prosecutor at Rome, the delator seemed for the moment to be a public convenience. When Tiberius came to the throne he allowed public informers to be used yet more widely. But there is no more dangerous weapon than this, and when he saw to what it led he did his utmost to check it. This did not prove an easy task, especially after Tiberius went to live at Capri, and left the government of Rome largely in the hands of Sejanus. Sejanus used informers freely, and Tiberius' memory has the discredit for all that Sejanus did. The public informer, used in connection with a wide law of treason, can produce infinite mischief in a State.

When Tiberius was sixty-seven years of age, he went on 26.
tour in Campania. During the tour an accident happened to the party. They were dining in a grotto when some rocks fell. Some of the servants were crushed, and only the presence of mind and devotion of Sejanus, who sprang forward and held a rock back by main strength, prevented the emperor from being seriously injured. Tiberius was grateful to Sejanus, and he became a greater favourite than ever.

After the emperor's business in Campania was completed, he visited Capri. Struck by the peacefulness of the island and the contrast it afforded to the bustle and turmoil of Rome, he determined to remain there for a time. He enjoyed the island so much that he ordered villas to be built for the residence of

himself and his officials, and a stay intended at first to be for days was prolonged to a stay of eleven years.

Roman historians have not been ashamed to affirm gross and hateful reasons for this love of seclusion. Nothing could be more ungenerous and absurd. Tiberius was now an old man. He had seen much sorrow and felt many disappointments. He detested Rome, and the peacefulness of Capri was refreshing in the extreme. Possibly it would have been better if he had withdrawn altogether from the affairs of empire. But it is not easy for an autocrat to resign, unless perhaps he has a popular son willing to take his place. Tiberius had none. His only son Drusus had died three years before. For the moment no one was distinctly indicated as his successor. Under these circumstances, resignation was no easy matter. As he himself put it, he held a wolf by the ears; it was dangerous to keep hold; it was yet more dangerous to let go.

Though living in Capri, Tiberius kept in close touch with imperial affairs. Whatever dissatisfaction there may have been at Rome, there was none in the provinces. Tiberius did not travel about as Augustus had done, but he paid close attention to the general welfare of the empire. Four proconsuls were condemned for maladministration, and a much needed regulation made governors responsible for the rapacity of their wives. Tiberius said "it was the part of a shepherd to shear not to flay his flock".

The government of the city of Rome was in the hands of Sejanus, the prefect of the guards. Sejanus would have made an able and brilliant governor had Tiberius been there to look after him, but he was not worthy of supreme power. He was ambitious and unscrupulous, and made bitter enemies. Tiberius loaded him with honours, and he undoubtedly expected to succeed him. Perhaps at one time this was the emperor's intention, and had Sejanus walked more warily it might have been so. But when he perceived that Sejanus was presuming, his mind turned towards Caligula, the son of Ger-

manicus, of whom we have already spoken, and who had now developed from the child into the full-grown man.

Perceiving that his hopes of succession were baulked Sejanus conspired. The conspiracy was discovered and Sejanus met with the fate of so many royal favourites. He was arrested and executed, and his death was followed by the execution of his family and friends.

In the seventy-eighth year of his age Tiberius, realising 37.
that the end was drawing nigh, quitted Capri and journeyed towards Rome. When travelling along the Appian Way, and already within seven miles of the city, alarmed at some evil omen, he turned back and retraced his steps as far as Misenum. There, in the villa of Lucullus, he died.

Tiberius was an unpopular man. Perhaps he was a hard man. But he was a great man, well worthy to stand side by side with Julius and Augustus as one of the three founders of the Roman Empire.

Although an opportunity will arise for dealing more fully with the rise of Christianity, it would be unseemly to forget that it was during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius that the solemn events took place in Judæa which so wonderfully changed the history of mankind.

It was during a census held by virtue of a decree from Augustus that Christ was born in Bethlehem. Pontius Pilate, under whom our Lord suffered crucifixion, had received his appointment from Sejanus. When the mob shouted: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend," it was Tiberius of whom they were speaking. Serious complaints had already reached the emperor of Pilate's tyrannical conduct and he dreaded further complaint, the more as his patron, Sejanus, had himself been executed for treason. So, to escape the dreaded severity of Tiberius, and little dreaming of the vast and august tribunal by whom his decision would be revised, "Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required".

When Tiberius died the apostles had begun their labours, but the Gospel had not yet reached Rome. But it was approaching, for just about the time that the emperor passed away Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, received his spiritual baptism.

CHAPTER VI.

GAIUS (CALIGULA).

ROME had now enjoyed good government for three-quarters of a century. Julius Cæsar, the last president of the republic, was one of the great men of the ancient world. Augustus, his successor, the first of the emperors, was an extremely capable and popular man. Tiberius, who followed him, though unpopular, was also extremely capable. He was severe and even cruel, but his hand was heavy only upon the rich, and chiefly upon the Roman senators. The empire as a whole prospered exceedingly under its stern monarch. 37.

The condition of the empire at this time has been thus described by Philo of Alexandria:—

"Who was not amazed and delighted at beholding Gaius assume the government of the empire, tranquil and well-ordered as it was, fitted and compact in all its parts, north and south, east and west, Greek and barbarian, soldier and civilian, all combined together in the enjoyment of a common peace and prosperity? It abounded everywhere in accumulated treasures of gold and silver, coin and plate; it boasted a vast force, both of horse and foot, by land and by sea, and its resources flowed, as it were, from a perennial fountain. Nothing was to be seen throughout our cities but altars and sacrifices, priests clad in white and garlanded, the joyous ministers of the general mirth; festivals and assemblies, musical contests and horse-races, nocturnal revels, amusements, recreations, pleasures of every kind and addressed to every sense. The rich no longer lorded it over the poor, the strong upon the weak, masters upon servants, or creditors on their debtors; the distinctions of classes were levelled by the occa-

sion; so that the Saturnian age of the poets might no longer be regarded as a fiction, so nearly was it revived in the life of that happy era" (Bury, *Roman Empire*, p. 219).

The passage is well worth quoting, not only because it gives a bright description of the Roman Empire, but because it is as strong a testimony as could be given to the excellent government of Tiberius, all the stronger because it was probably rather meant to be in laudation of his successor. But it is not at the beginning of a reign that the condition of an empire speaks in favour of a ruler, but at the end.

Undoubtedly at this time the main body of the people were prosperous and well governed. The condition of the capital was far from satisfactory. But Italy and the provinces were at peace, the humble majority were allowed to spend their days in quiet, and they were better off under the emperors than they had been under the republic.

Gaius succeeded to Tiberius amidst general enthusiasm. He was but five and twenty, the great-grandson of Augustus, the son of Germanicus, a favourite both with soldiers and people. He succeeded a stern, gloomy, unpopular old man, during whose reign there had been repression and even terror. Every one welcomed the new monarch. There was feasting and rejoicing throughout the empire.

Tiberius had been a careful financier and without adding to the taxes had so governed that he left Gaius a full treasury, about twenty millions of accumulated savings, some part of which at least might be spent for the benefit of the people. Never had monarch a better chance. And for a time Gaius did well. He banished informers, released prisoners, recalled exiles, modified the law of treason, remitted taxation, and declared his intention of restoring to the plebs the ancient rights of election of which they had been deprived. These measures were not all wise, but they made him popular, and when he also restored to the games their ancient splendour and scattered gifts broadcast he won for himself unbounded applause.

For about seven months Gaius paid strict attention to business, and everything seemed to promise a beneficent reign. Then all at once he broke down. He had given a birthday banquet, a magnificent entertainment. It was a turning-point in his career. From that moment he degenerated, neglected business, became the slave of his passions, and acted in such a way that it would be generous to believe that his mind was affected.

Probably Gaius was always a weakling. His early days were spent in camp with soldiers. The men made much of him, and perhaps taught him mischief. Afterwards he was for a time with Tiberius and had to repress himself. When Tiberius died and he became emperor the suddenness of the elevation sobered him and kept him straight. Then came the banquet and Gaius probably got drunk and fell once more under the power of evil. From that time he made no further effort to keep himself straight. He gave the reins to his lusts, and Rome was governed by a debauchee.

In the degradation of the young emperor no influence was more malign than that of Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, and nephew of Herod Antipas. Agrippa was a shrewd worldling, dissipated and unprincipled. He gained great influence over Gaius, and filled his poor, empty mind with visions of Oriental splendour and voluptuousness. Nor was Agrippa's the only evil influence at court. For years Gaius had been devoted to Ennia, the wife of Macro, the prætorian prefect, and there were others with whom his relationship was even more dishonourable.

The reign of Gaius was not entirely filled with folly. In the erection of public buildings he would fain have followed the example of Augustus. Tiberius had been careful, perhaps even parsimonious; Gaius had large views. The palace of the Cæsars was enlarged, temples were completed, and the theatre of Pompey, which had been partially burnt, was restored. One exceedingly useful work he began, but was unable to complete, the carrying of a fresh water supply to Rome by an aqueduct.

He also constructed a viaduct between the Palatine and Capitoline hills. He is said even to have planned a canal across the Isthmus of Corinth, a work only completed in our own time.

At times Gaius either did utter mischief or wasted money shamefully. He smashed the statues of distinguished republicans which Augustus had erected, either in a drunken fit or because he was jealous of their fame. Perhaps, for the last reason, he ordered that the works of Virgil and Livy should be removed from the libraries.

39. Gaius built a bridge of boats three miles long across the gulf from Baiae to Puteoli, not as a permanent structure, but because some one had made the statement that he was just as likely to drive a chariot across the sea as to become emperor. That both might happen he built the bridge at great cost, covered it with planking and earth, and drove a triumphal chariot across it.

Money was wasted upon fruitless expeditions. One of these was professedly against the Germans, the other was meant for the conquest of Britain. The German expedition achieved nothing, and the army intended to conquer Britain never went farther than the French coast. Absurd stories are told about these expeditions, but they may be exaggerated.

Conduct like that which we have recorded brought financial trouble. The unbounded generosity of the first months of the reign and the reckless profusion of the after period soon told their tale. The millions left by Tiberius were swallowed up, and Gaius began to be in want. The real nature of the man then came out. Ruined by his extravagances, but determined not to curtail his pleasures, he plundered his subjects both in Rome and in the provinces. The reforms, by the promise of which he had gained a fleeting popularity, now vanished away. The law of treason was revived and made wider than ever. Informers were again encouraged, and rich men were accused of offences merely in order that their substance might be seized. New taxes were imposed mercilessly both at Rome and in Italy. Taxes on imports, octroi taxes, income taxes and such

like were freely imposed. Worse than all the currency was debased. Thus did a four years' reign, begun with an overflowing treasury, end in bankruptcy.

It seems like a jest to read that this worthless man was most punctilious with regard to the payment of divine honours to himself. His determination to receive adoration as a god led to serious conflict with the Jews both in Judæa and in Alexandria.

In Alexandria the Jews were ordered, not indeed by Gaius himself, but by the prefect, to set up statues of the emperor in their synagogues. When they refused there were serious riots, and many were slain. The Jews sent an embassy to Gaius to protest, and the Alexandrian citizens sent a counter embassy. On the arrival of the Jews in Italy, what was their horror to hear that the emperor had sent orders to Petronius, the governor of Judæa, to set up a huge statue of him in the Holy of Holies, in the temple at Jerusalem. This gave them little encouragement, but they went on and saw Gaius. He behaved like a lunatic, but did them no harm, looking upon them as men rather to be pitied than blamed. Fortunately his death prevented the awful scenes which would have followed any serious attempt to carry out his orders in Jerusalem.

The condition of the Jews under Roman sway had changed for the worse. For a time their condition had not been unhappy. The Roman garrisons had protected them, the Roman governors and civil officers had been fair, the fiscal burdens had not been oppressive. When anything went very far wrong the Jews appealed to Rome, and did not always appeal in vain.

Pontius Pilate had brought serious trouble to Judæa. Appointed governor in the reign of Tiberius by Sejanus, he neither understood the Jews nor cared to understand them. His insolence and cruelty maddened them, there had been serious insurrection and brutal massacre. In the striking words of Scripture, "Their blood had been mingled with their sacrifices".

Pilate had also treated the Samaritans with cruelty, and they complained of his conduct to Vitellius, the governor of Egypt. Vitellius ordered Pilate to quit Judæa and proceed to Rome to submit himself to the judgment of the emperor. Accordingly, just four years after the crucifixion, Pilate went to Rome a disgraced man. He arrived to find Tiberius dead, and probably looked on the death of the stern monarch as a happy augury. But it was early days with Gaius, and in his reforming zeal he condemned Pilate and banished him to Gaul. Pilate went to Gaul a broken man, and is believed to have put an end to his own life.

41. Gaius made many bitter enemies during his brief reign, and a conspiracy was formed against him. Prætorian officers were the leaders of the conspiracy, and they assassinated him as he was passing through a vaulted corridor in the vast palace which he had built for himself on the Palatine. His body was hastily buried in the gardens, but was afterwards exhumed and cremated. At the time of his death the unhappy emperor had only reached the age of thirty years.

CHAPTER VII.

CLAUDIUS.

WHEN a monarch dies there is usually some one else ready 41.
to fill his place, but when Gaius was assassinated there had been no thought of a successor. Gaius was himself too young to have left a son of suitable age, and no one had been indicated during his brief reign as likely to succeed.

The senators met at once to consider the state of affairs. Few regretted the death of Gaius, but concerning the future they were divided. Some wished to abolish the empire and return to the republic, others wished to continue the empire, but change the dynasty. The prætorian guards solved the problem. Ransacking the palace for plunder, some of them found Claudius, the son of Drusus, brother of Germanicus and uncle of the dead monarch, hiding for fear of his life. To his amazement they did not slay him there and then, but greeted him as emperor, and carried him off to the camp.

The guards had heard of the proposal in the Senate that the republic should be revived, and the suggestion did not suit them at all. Probably it would have meant their disbandment had there been no other objection. They determined to have an emperor, and why not Claudius?

Claudius did not desire the honour. He was a shy man, and the death of his nephew had greatly alarmed him. When the soldiers saluted him imperator he thought it was in mockery, and when they hurried him to the camp the spectators thought that he was being hurried to execution. They never dreamt of making Claudius emperor. But the soldiers were in earnest. They wanted an emperor. The Senate had to yield, Claudius himself had to yield, and he was formally invested with the imperium.

Tiberius Claudius Cæsar was at this time fifty years of age. He had physical disadvantages. He was deformed, he spoke indistinctly, he walked with shuffling gait. For these reasons he had been disliked by his mother, slighted by his relatives, and neglected by all. He had lived in the country for the most part, and become a nervous and diffident man.

The contempt of the Roman court was better for the character of Claudius than its friendship would have been. He had scholarly tastes and became extremely well-educated. Weak and pedantic though he seemed, he was far abler than many who despised him.

It is sufficient answer to those who have spoken of Claudius as mentally weak to say that he wrote three large historical works, an Etruscan, a Carthaginian, and a Roman history. The Etruscan and Carthaginian histories were written in Greek. Other books he wrote, but these were the most important. Claudius was a rough, undignified man. He has been likened to James I. of England, and like that monarch he was far from being a fool. He did not seek his position, but when it was thrust upon him he rose to the occasion, displayed considerable administrative talent, and did his best for the welfare of the State. Nor was he unsuccessful. His record is exceedingly good: he left an indelible mark upon the history of the empire.

Claudius had to begin his reign by undoing some of the mischief which Gaius had done. Estates, unjustly confiscated, were restored to their owners. Political exiles were recalled, and persons lying under charge of treason were released. A senatorial conspiracy, inaugurated by men who were too proud to serve a man whom they had affected to despise, was crushed; and then Claudius settled down to the ordinary duties of administration.

Claudius had the deepest reverence for Augustus, and aimed to make him his pattern. Augustus had kept up cordial relations with the Senate. Claudius did the same. He restored to them the powers of which they had been deprived by

Tiberius, and strengthened their roll by the admission of new members.

In administering justice Claudius was perhaps more assiduous than wise. It is not best that a sovereign should personally sit on the bench, but Claudius did so: hearing the cases that came before him hour after hour with infinite patience. Perhaps this gave him an insight into the law which he would not otherwise have obtained, and enabled him to carry out his reforms with greater assurance.

Claudius' legal reforms were substantial. He greatly modified the law of treasons, suppressed informers, and checked the use of torture. He tried to restore the right of legislation to the plebs, and revived the ancient *plebiscita*. But he soon found, as others had found before him, that this was unworkable, and all his important legislation had to be enacted by means of *Senatus consulta*.

Various important public works were carried out during the reign of Claudius. The two great aqueducts, which Gaius must have the credit of commencing, were finished by Claudius. A new harbour was constructed at Ostia, which proved of the greatest utility; and efforts were made on a considerable scale to drain the Fucine Lake, though the works were not permanently successful.

During the reign of Claudius the conquest of Britain was seriously undertaken. The subjugation of the Britons, who lived in the ends of the earth, had been in the minds of many Julius Cæsar had twice attempted the conquest; Augustus had twice prepared for it; Tiberius had declared it necessary even Gaius had set out on the expedition, though he got no further than Boulogne. Claudius determined that the work should be accomplished. Perhaps the reputed wealth of the island attracted him, more likely he was willing that his name should be associated with the adding of another province to the empire.

Four legions were allotted to the expedition, and there were many auxiliaries. Aulus Plautius was chosen to com-

mand, and he had many distinguished officers serving under him. Among these were two men who afterwards wore the purple, Galba and Vespasian. The forces all told numbered about 50,000 men.

43. An enormous transport fleet gathered at Boulogne, and the men crossed safely and landed unopposed at three different places on the south coast.

At that time the Trinobantes, whose capital, formerly, in the days of Cæsar, at St. Albans, was now at Camalodunum (Colchester), had sway over South-Eastern Britain. They, under their leaders Caractacus and Togodumnus, took the field against the Romans. They fought bravely, but were steadily driven back, first across the Medway, then across the Thames.

Having driven the enemy thus far, Plautius paused, reported to Claudius, and awaited his arrival. The emperor had determined to take part in the contest himself, and had given orders that the way should be prepared, but that the final blow should not be struck before his arrival. He now hurried from Rome, and found the troops encamped near Londinium (London). A great battle was fought there, the Trinobantes were routed, and Plautius, pressing his advantage, captured Colchester, their capital. Claudius remained in the island sixteen days, and then, leaving Plautius to finish the conquest he recrossed the Channel, wintered in Gaul, and returned to Rome in the spring.

44. After the departure of Claudius, Plautius spent several years in Britain, pressing forward the conquest of the southern and western portion of the island. This went on steadily until the Romans had sway as far west as Bath and as far north as Colchester. The general then returned to Rome and was received with due honour.

P. Ostorius Scapula succeeded Plautius. He was fiercely opposed by the Iceni in the north, and by other tribes under Caractacus in the west. The Iceni were defeated at some near Daventry in Northamptonshire, and were quiet for a

Caractacus held out tenaciously on the borders of Wales and even forced the Romans back. But having unwisely risked a pitched battle he was completely defeated. Soon afterwards he was betrayed to the Romans and carried to Rome. It is to Claudius' credit that he pardoned the British hero, though he detained him in honourable captivity until his death. 51.

When Claudius came to the throne a Jewish rebellion was imminent. Gaius had, it will be remembered, ridden roughshod over the religious prejudices of the Jews, and had ordered that his statue should be erected in the temple at Jerusalem. Claudius pacified the people by issuing edicts protecting their worship. He also restored the kingdom of Herod for a time. After Herod's death Judæa had been governed by a procurator, but Claudius gave Judæa, Samaria and other provinces to Herod's grandson, the Agrippa of whom mention has been already made.

The man thus elevated was that Herod Agrippa I. who slew James the brother of John with the sword, and from whose hands Peter so narrowly escaped. He had been a great deal at Rome with Gaius, and knew Claudius well. He was one of the few who had foresight enough to realise that the man whom people thought so little of might one day become emperor. Accordingly he had kept on friendly terms with him, and now reaped a rich reward. Agrippa loved popularity and found that he could become popular with the Jews by persecuting the Christians. His kingdom did not last long. When he had reigned about three years he died of a most painful disease. His son, seventeen years of age, was deemed too young to succeed him, and Judæa was again put under a procurator. Four years later the youth was made king of the northern principalities, but not of Judæa. He reigned for fifty-one years as Herod Agrippa II. It was before him that the Apostle Paul made his celebrated defence. 44.

During the reign of Claudius the king's servants became of much greater importance than they had been in former reigns.

For this reason historians have accused Claudius of exalting his favourites, an accusation which has been made in most countries during the transition period. In every expanding country a time comes when it is no longer possible for one man to transact all the business of the State and when he must either let things slide or delegate duties to men in whom he has confidence. When a country is blessed with constitutional government the people choose the ministers, but whilst it is only yet emerging from autocracy the autocrat must choose them. Naturally the men who are not chosen are discontented, and, as they are in a majority, sovereigns have been dethroned over and over again for this very thing. Yet it has been by the employment of so-called favourites that countries have slowly learned the enormous advantages of ministerial government.

That Claudius should make Narcissus his secretary, Pallas his accountant, and Polybius Minister of Education, was an offence in Rome. The aristocrats who were passed over in favour of men of more humble rank, were full of wrath, as they have been in all countries and in all ages. But Claudius endeavoured to choose the men whom he deemed most capable of transacting the business of State. If some of the men whom he thus advanced abused their position and made large fortunes by their patronage Claudius was not to blame. That sort of thing had been common in Rome for many a day.

Claudius was unfortunate in his domestic affairs. His first wife Plautia was divorced with sufficient reason. His second wife Ælia Pactina was divorced without sufficient reason. He
38. then married Messalina, a woman connected on her mother's side with the Cæsars. All this was before he ascended the throne.

By Messalina Claudius had a son, Tiberius Claudius Germanicus, afterwards called Britannicus, in memory of the conquest of Britain. Messalina was not a good woman but she had great influence over her husband. At last she went too far and was condemned to death. She had many enemies

and we cannot really tell how far she was to blame. Even after her condemnation Claudius would have forgiven her, and sent for her, but her enemies had been too quick for him and declared that by his orders the execution was already past.

After the death of Messalina, Claudius married Agrippina his niece, daughter of Germanicus, and sister of Gaius, the former emperor. No precedent for marriage with a niece existed at Rome, and there was a strong prejudice against it, but a decree was passed by the Senate authorising marriage with the daughters of brothers. The decree, strangely enough, did not authorise marriage with the daughters of sisters, and this distinction remained.

Agrippina had been already married to a Roman noble, Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, and had a son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus. Her son was older than her stepson, Britannicus, and Agrippina determined that if she could accomplish it he and not Britannicus should succeed Claudius on the throne. The first step was to secure her son's adoption by the emperor, and with some persuasion Claudius took him into the family 50.
under the name of Nero Claudius Cæsar Drusus Germanicus. His position having been thus recognised the young man was rapidly advanced and pushed into various public offices. Britannicus was kept in the background.

Whilst we say these things in deference to the views of historians of the period we must also in common fairness remember that Nero was born 37 A.D., whilst Britannicus was born 42 A.D. The latter was, therefore, at this time a mere child, whereas the former was just emerging into manhood. When we remember this the action of Agrippina loses any sinister significance. She did in this matter just what any mother possessed of common sense would do in the present day.

At the age of sixteen Nero married Octavia, the daughter 53.
of Claudius and Messalina, so that he was now son-in-law to the emperor. How things would have gone had Claudius lived a few years longer until Britannicus had reached man-

hood we cannot say. Unfortunately for the world he died.
54. It is said that Agrippina, foreseeing that if he lived he would appoint Britannicus as his successor, poisoned him. The idea is too far-fetched to be worthy of serious consideration. Roman history is largely made up of scandal, and abounds in accusations concerning poisoning. It is far more likely that Claudius died a natural death. He was sixty-four years of age and his health had never been good.

Considering the difficulties under which Claudius laboured he deserves the greatest credit. He may have been eccentric, pedantic, perhaps at times foolish. Most men have their faults. But he was an earnest worker and a persevering man. He had the ability of the Cæsars and is worthy to stand on the same platform as his three great predecessors—Julius, Augustus and Tiberius.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHRISTIANS.

We are now approaching the reign of Nero, the first Roman emperor who drew the sword of the civil power against the Christians. That we may the better understand what this implied it is necessary that we should diverge from the political narrative for a moment and glance at the origin and rise of Christianity.

The existence of the universe presupposes the existence of a Creator. So far as the doctrine of evolution is true it in no way affects this belief. Evolution is merely one of the laws by means of which the Creator operates.

Amongst the created beings of whom we are cognisant man stands highest. He is endowed with freedom of action, and is capable of attaining to a high level of wisdom and knowledge.

Though it is obviously the desire of the Creator that man should make his own choice between good and evil, and should unfettered work out his own destiny, it is improbable that He would leave him entirely without a revelation of his character and will.

Such revelation would almost of necessity take a miraculous form. If we believe in the existence of a Creator miracles easily follow. If we doubt His existence we are confronted with the greatest miracle of all.

A revelation from the Creator would probably be made through some man or some family of men. We believe that the Hebrew race was chosen for this purpose. When the whole world was plunged in polytheism and idolatry the Hebrews clung with the utmost tenacity to the knowledge of the one true God, a spiritual being, "dwelling not in temples made

with hands, neither worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything".

To the keeping of this remarkable race we believe that God committed for a season the knowledge of his oracles and of his true character, and though they proved unworthy in many ways, yet they guarded this particular trust with jealous care.

The Scriptures, of which the Hebrews were the custodians, foretold a time when God would send a fuller revelation through a Messiah in whom, not one race only, but all the families of the earth should be blessed.

The Jews, as the Hebrews were called in later times, eagerly expected this Messiah. Their nation had suffered greatly, they had lost empire and independence, they were hated and despised, but they believed that their troubles would end when the Messiah came, and that he would raise their nation to a height of imperial splendour far surpassing that of any former time.

In the reign of Augustus, in Bethlehem, a small town in Judæa, there was born one Jesus Christ. The circumstances of his birth need not be referred to here, further than to say, that they were supernatural, and that they accurately fulfilled various prophecies in the Scriptures believed to be Messianic.

Up to the age of thirty Jesus Christ lived the simple life of a Galilean peasant. His reputed father was a carpenter, and could scarcely have given his children any but a rudimentary education. There were no great schools of philosophy in Galilee, visits to Jerusalem must have been rare, and a young Galilean carpenter would see few books except the Scriptures.

At the age of thirty, Jesus Christ left his home and began to preach and teach. He chose twelve men to accompany him, to hear what he said, witness what he did, and carry on the work after he had departed. They were plain men like himself, mostly fishermen, one was a tax gatherer.

The teaching of the Galilean peasant was unique. There was no straining after popularity. Rather was it the reverse.

The virtues which he extolled were those which men despise; meekness, non-resistance, purity, mercy, self-abasement. As for wealth, fame, worldly success, and such like matters after which men mostly strive, he said they were of no account.

Christ's teaching was free from excitement, superstition, sophistry, or uncharitableness. He was not narrow-minded, his rules were suitable, not only for the Jewish race, but for all men and for all times.

The manner of Christ's teaching was remarkable. He did not argue or explain. He uttered short sententious rules as one having perfect knowledge and full authority. He summed up all that it was necessary to remember, in order to lead a perfect life in two simple but never to be forgotten precepts, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart"; "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself".

Much of Christ's teaching, and many of the parables by which it was illustrated, have been preserved to us by his companions. Though twenty centuries have gone by, and the world may be presumed to have grown in wisdom and experience, Christ's teaching has never been improved upon. It stands alone, perfect, unique.

The teaching of Jesus Christ was accompanied by miracles, not performed in order to draw attention to himself, but done out of love and sympathy. Amongst the miracles were many which could not be hid. He restored sight to men who had been blind for years, even from birth; he healed lepers; thrice he raised the dead.

Though the people and his disciples would gladly have made him a king, and he could easily have placed himself at the head of a popular movement, he resisted every suggestion of this nature, and kept himself free from political entanglement and worldly affairs.

He informed his disciples that he was the Messiah promised by God in the Scriptures, and that he was Divine. He said that his mission was a spiritual one, that he was the appointed Saviour of mankind. His disciples accepted his

statements, though they only feebly grasped his meaning, and hoped to the very last that he would restore a temporal kingdom to Israel.

After three years' ministry, Christ told his disciples that it was necessary for the fulfilment of his purposes that he should die the death of crucifixion, but he said that they must not be unduly grieved, for he would rise from the dead on the third day. He told them that as his mission upon earth would be accomplished he would not remain, but that after his bodily presence had been removed his Spirit would return and dwell with his followers for ever.

Christ said that it would be their task as soon as his Spirit descended upon them to go about the world offering salvation from the guilt and power of sin to all who would believe on his name. He warned them that in the fulfilment of this mission they would meet with hatred, opposition, imprisonment, death, but that they were not to be daunted, for they would have an eternal reward, and would never lose the consciousness of his presence.

Shortly after saying these things Christ was crucified, and the disciples, forgetting all his promises, and thinking they would never see their master again, were in the depths of sorrow. His enemies, however, remembered his saying about rising on the third day, and determined to make sure that there was no pretence of anything of that sort. Accordingly, they obtained custody of the body, into which a spear had been thrust, so that there might be no doubt that he was dead. They laid the body in a sepulchre, placed a great stone before the door, sealed it, and set an armed guard.

Notwithstanding all their precautions, Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day. He was first seen by Mary, then by Peter, then by two disciples, then by the chief disciples together. After that he was seen frequently, on one occasion by 500 at one time. The disciples talked with him, ate and walked with him, and touched his person in order to remove all doubt.

Christ then instructed his disciples to remain at Jerusalem until the promised Spirit should descend upon them, and at last, having been with them for forty days, he ascended to heaven, vanishing from a mountain in the presence of three witnesses, Peter, James and John.

In accordance with their master's command, the disciples waited, and ten days after the ascension, whilst they were gathered together and engaged in prayer, the promised Spirit descended. The result was remarkable. Though unlettered men they became filled with power, and preached with such confidence and success that thousands joined their ranks. On the first day they had 3,000, later they numbered 5,000, later still they were described as a multitude amongst whom were many priests. Though at first their converts were mostly drawn from the humbler classes, yet from the beginning they had amongst them persons of wealth and position, and as time went on they drew their converts from every rank.

The disciples never varied in their testimony. They declared that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, and had therefore proved himself to be God. The day on which they began to preach, and on which they made 3,000 converts in Jerusalem, where all these things had happened, was just fifty days after the crucifixion, at a time when the events were fresh in the minds of all, and when authoritative contradiction would have been easy. Yet all that the priests who had taken charge of the body could say was that the disciples had stolen it whilst the watchmen slept.

Had there been any truth in this statement, the question would have at once arisen: What had become of the body so stolen? Had the disciples' declaration concerning the resurrection been fraudulent, the fraud could not have survived the production of Jesus Christ, alive or dead, even for one hour. But he was not produced, though his enemies had all the resources of the State at their command.

As for the disciples themselves they must have been either deceivers or deceived.

Were they deceivers? The whole life history of the men shows them to have been noble-minded. They taught the purest and most refined doctrine known to man, and they taught it in the face of cruel persecution. Had their master been really dead as they at first believed that he was, they had nothing to gain by denying it. They could have returned to their avocations and said nothing more about the matter. Going on with the deception could bring no gain to them. It meant defying the ecclesiastical and civil power. It meant for many of them mockery, imprisonment, death. Dear though their master had been to them there was no need to carry things so far. The fact that he was dead was a proof that to that extent at least he had been mistaken, and there the matter might have ended. This surely would have been the attitude of reasonable men. But it was not their attitude. Men and women, old and young, rich and poor, they confidently affirmed that their Lord had risen. Words cannot describe the persecution which they endured. But it made no difference. They never faltered, and many of them sealed their testimony with their blood.

Were they then deceived? Could they have seen an apparition? In such a case the delusion could have been set at rest in a moment by the production of their Lord's body. A ghost implies that there is a body somewhere. Where was Christ's? At first they themselves thought that they saw a ghost. But he said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have". They did as he said. They touched him, ate with him, saw him often during the remaining period spent by him upon earth, saw him ascend into heaven, and then, filled with rapture, went forth to declare their wonderful message to the world. All that their master had said about persecution turned out true. It was inexpressibly bitter. But they never quailed. They were mocked, imprisoned, scourged, tortured, torn to pieces by wild

beasts and dogs, but they never varied in their story, they never denied their Lord.

Yet immensely important though the fact of the resurrection is, it does not entirely explain the rise of Christianity. The resurrection convinced eye-witnesses, and those who learned the facts from eye-witnesses. But had the resurrection been all, Christianity might never have spread beyond that generation. As time advanced, the importance of even the resurrection would have faded. It needed more than this, therefore, to keep Christianity alive. There was more. Jesus Christ had made two promises. He promised that he would rise from the dead, he promised also that after his ascension to heaven he would send down a spiritual being who would dwell with his disciples for ever.

The meaning of Christ's second promise was first understood on the day of Pentecost. It has been understood by every true believer since. All who sincerely accept Christ as Lord receive this token of his acceptance of them. Until the believer receives this token he has not reached firm ground. He may have been attracted by the beauty of Christianity, by the arguments in its favour, by the evident happiness of Christians. But taking up an amiable attitude towards Christianity does not make a man a Christian. For that there must be personal contact with a living Saviour.

Neither historical truth nor sound argument could have kept Christianity alive. Christianity lives because Christ lives, and because he is present with every believer. Had Socrates said to his weeping disciples, "Do not mourn: I only appear to leave you: my bodily presence is being removed, but you will be able to recognise my indwelling presence every day, every hour, I shall be with you alway even to the end of the world," his words would have been in vain, for he was a man like themselves.

Christ spake thus to his disciples, and though they could not at the time comprehend his meaning, a few days after his ascension they knew what he meant. True believers have

known the meaning of his words ever since. Every time that a man steps over the line between the world and Christ, and loyally accepts the Galilean as Lord and Master the day of Pentecost is repeated in his experience.

It is this continually repeated experience which has kept Christianity alive, and has led men from generation to generation to proclaim it to the world. It is not possible to explain the experience to an unbeliever any more than it is possible to explain what sight means to one who has been born blind. But when a man has experienced this spiritual baptism, the truth of Christianity has ceased to be matter of opinion and has become matter of knowledge.

The great writer on the decay and fall of the Roman empire, in endeavouring to explain why Christianity made such rapid progress, gives as one reason that "abandoned sinners" joined the Church "oppressed by the consciousness, and very often by the effects of their vices. As they emerged from sin and superstition to the glorious hope of immortality, they resolved to devote themselves to a life, not only of virtue, but of penitence. The desire of perfection became the ruling passion of their soul. . . . When the new converts had been enrolled in the number of the faithful and were admitted to the sacraments of the Church they found themselves restrained from relapsing into their past disorders by another consideration of a less spiritual, but of a very innocent and respectable nature. Any particular society that has departed from the great body of the nation or the religion to which it belongs immediately becomes the object of universal as well as invidious observation. In proportion to the smallness of its numbers, the character of the society may be affected by the virtues and vices of the persons who compose it; and every member is engaged to watch with the most vigilant attention over his own behaviour and over that of his brethren, since, as he must expect to incur a part of the common disgrace, he may hope to enjoy a share of the common reputation."

That Christianity provides a way of escape from the guilt

and power of sin to the most abandoned wretch who sincerely repents and unfeignedly believes God's Holy Gospel is true, but that any society of Christians can, by their united efforts, lift the burden of sin from the conscience of the sinner is not true. And if they cannot do this, far less can they give him victory over the power of sin, or instil into his heart a sure hope of immortality. Only God himself can do these things, and they do not follow admission into the Church of Christ, they precede it.

Men cannot receive any one, good or bad, into the Church of Christ. Admission can only be granted by Christ himself. All who truly accept him are baptised into his Spirit, and become members of his family. Believers thus baptised by the Spirit form the Church of Christ, the kingdom of God among men, not merely a professing but a spiritual Church, one with his household and family in heaven. All thus baptised with the Holy Spirit belong to this Church, those who are strangers to this baptism, no matter with what human organisation they may connect themselves, are outside the Church of Christ.

In early times believers thus baptised, recognising one another as members of the same divine family, formed themselves into societies for mutual edification and support. As time progressed the societies became more powerful, and kings for political purposes took them under their patronage. Then finding them convenient instruments of government they formed them into State organisations, and that which was intended by Christ to be purely a spiritual society became little more than a branch of the civil service. The important initial step of baptism by Christ's Spirit was lost sight of, and human rites and ceremonies took its place.

Nevertheless in these human societies there have been always some who were also members of the divine society, and they have kept the vital truth alive and spread the knowledge of it throughout the world.

Remembering these things, we can now more clearly under-

stand the position of the primitive Church. At that time the profession of Christianity brought no credit with it, and few mere professors without experimental knowledge of its truth cared to join the society. It was confined to true believers and their children.

To men like Pliny and Marcus Aurelius the attitude of the members of this primitive Church was incomprehensible. Believing that religion could not possibly be more than a matter of opinion in any case, they thought that the way in which Christians adhered to their faith arose from pure obstinacy. How dared such humble folk put their opinions against the opinions of much wiser and greater men.

But that which emperors and historians thought obstinacy was only the demonstration of that certainty which is the seal of the inheritance of the true believer. The primitive Church had few besides believers within its ranks. It was, therefore, mainly composed of men and women who knew that they were right, and knew it with a knowledge which the world could neither give nor take away. It was this certainty which made them eager to tell others the wonderful secret which they had learned, it was this certainty which fitted them to confront unflinchingly the baptism of blood with which the primitive Church was now about to be baptised.

CHAPTER IX.

NERO.

WE have now to consider the career of an emperor who has left a singularly dark stain upon history. He was a bad man and we are not concerned to defend him, yet historians have not always dealt fairly with his memory. 54.

Nero was the son of Agrippina and Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus (Brazenbeard). Agrippina was the daughter of Germanicus and the sister of Caligula. Ahenobarbus was descended from Octavia, the sister of Augustus. Nero was, therefore, of royal blood on both sides of his house.

We have seen in the last chapter how Claudius, after he had married Agrippina, adopted Nero. Before Claudius died the youth was already looked upon as his successor, and his accession was acquiesced in by all. Claudius had left a son Britannicus, but he was a boy of twelve and Nero was over sixteen. Hereditary succession was not yet fully established at Rome, and from a constitutional point of view there was as much to be said for Nero as for Britannicus. He was older; he had filled public positions; he had been going out and in amongst the people; he was handsome and popular; he was the grandson of Germanicus. His accession was quite natural, and it is fair to him and to his mother, Agrippina, to begin his history by dismissing from our minds any thought that he reached the throne by crooked ways.

For Nero himself, however, his early succession was a misfortune. He was a youth with artistic tastes, clever at art, poetry and music. Had he been born in a more humble rank of life and been permitted to develop his talents in a natural way he might have left a gracious memory. Had he been born

with sovereign right in a State governed on modern constitutional lines he would have had a better chance. But he became autocrat of the Roman empire at seventeen, master of boundless wealth, surrounded by licentious women and unprincipled men ready to encourage him in every form of evil. What wonder if a boy like Nero, handsome, uneducated in any true sense, having never seen a good example, or been taught to aim at a high ideal, should make shipwreck of his life. Emperor at seventeen; a drunkard from boyhood; murderer of his brother at eighteen; of his mother at twenty-two; of his wife at twenty-five; of the beautiful devil who instigated most of the other crimes at twenty-eight; dead at thirty. Such was the sad record of this unhappy man, the last of the Cæsars.

Before Nero came to the throne Seneca had been his tutor. He could scarcely have had a worse. Seneca was a clever man and left works which may still be read with pleasure and profit. But he was a most dangerous mixture of the philosopher and the man of the world. Professedly a Stoic, and therefore presumably superior to the ordinary ambitions of mankind, he yet amassed a fortune so huge that it could not have been honestly come by; professedly a teacher of virtue he encouraged Nero in vice.

For the first years of Nero's reign Seneca and Agrippina contended for the mastery. Agrippina loved her son, and had great influence over him for a time; he spoke of her as the best of mothers. But he soon slipped away from her grasp. Agrippina has been accused of unworthily seeking after power because she clung to Nero as long as she could. Why a mother should be thus judged because she tried to control her boy of seventeen we fail to see. Is it not more likely to have been because she saw that the influence of Seneca and his other advisers was anything but good for the lad?

At first Agrippina acted as regent, and Nero, fond of pleasure, was glad to be relieved by her of the business of government. But Seneca, the philosopher, and Afranius

Burrus, prefect of the prætorian guard, plotted her overthrow. Accordingly they employed a Greek woman named Acte to fascinate Nero, and counteract the influence of his mother. The devilish scheme succeeded only too well. Recrimination followed, and Agrippina unwisely reminded Nero that but for her efforts his adoptive brother Britannicus might have been emperor. Perhaps she even threatened that this might yet be the case. As a result Nero was alarmed and Britannicus was poisoned.

After the murder of Britannicus, Agrippina perceived that 55.
her influence with Nero was at an end. She retired from public life, and the unfortunate youth went rapidly downhill. Choosing his friends from the most profligate of the nobility, he haunted taverns, became a midnight brawler, and indulged in dissipation of every sort.

That Nero, notwithstanding his dissipations, was a man of 58.
genuine ability is made clear by a suggestion which he made with regard to taxation. No financial genius had yet arisen in Rome, and taxation was raised with much oppression and inequality throughout the empire. Tax-farming, monopolies, and the heavy customs tariff by which monopolies have to be supported made millionaires of a handful of the people, and crushed the rest. Strangely enough Nero saw how things might be improved. In the year 58 he actually proposed to do away with the Vectigalia, the customs duties, establish free trade, and depend upon direct taxation. Had his scheme been carried out and extended throughout the empire the result would have been incalculable. The whole history of Europe might have been changed. Half the miseries of the Middle Ages were the direct fruit of the intense spirit of protection which everywhere abounded. But Nero's scheme never got a trial. His advisers represented to him that it would ruin the State. They meant that it would ruin them, for men like Seneca were in Nero's reign making their millions by grinding the faces of the poor.

When about twenty years of age Nero fell under the

fascinating influence of another paramour, Poppæa Sabina, an extremely beautiful but most licentious woman. Poppæa had been divorced by her first husband, and was now married to Otho, one of Nero's boon companions. Otho, not too proud to rise by his wife's disgrace, accepted the government of Lusitania and departed, leaving the coast clear for the emperor. From that moment Poppæa did as she liked with Nero.

The emperor was already married to Octavia, a daughter of the late emperor Claudius, and an excellent woman. She was only twenty years of age, but for several years had been living apart from Nero. Octavia and Agrippina maintained close friendship, and the two women were a standing reproach to Poppæa. She determined to remove them from her path.

Very likely the disgraceful liaison with Poppæa had led to renewed recrimination between Agrippina and her son, at any rate, a charge of conspiring against Nero's life was trumped up against her, and she was murdered. Whether Seneca was privy to the assassination before the event we cannot say, probably not, but he made himself an accomplice after the event by helping Nero to compose the letter which he sent to the Senate justifying the deed.

Nero had killed his half-brother and his mother, and was yet but two and twenty years of age. To drown care he drank more heavily and plunged more deeply into dissipation. Agrippina was out of the way, and Poppæa had absolute control. But Octavia stood between her and the purple, and she determined that she also should be sacrificed.

Seneca and Burrus had the grace to realise that matters were being carried too far, and to espouse the cause of the badly-used empress. Burrus died, and Poppæa proceeded to
62. remove Seneca from her path. Various charges were laid against him, and, perceiving that his day was done, he retired from public life.

Tigellinus was now prætorian prefect and Nero's chief adviser. He was the tool of Poppæa, and helped her in all that she did. Under their combined influence Nero divorced

Octavia on the ground of barrenness, and thereafter immediately married Poppæa. The people were exasperated, for Octavia was a Cæsar and a favourite. Poppæa saw that there could be no safety for her whilst her rival lived, and arranged for her banishment and execution. When the poor creature was murdered she was only in her twentieth year.

Soon after these events a terrible conflagration broke out 64.
in Rome. The fire began in the quarter where oil and fuel were stored, among shops filled with inflammable material. The appliances for extinguishing fire were quite inadequate, the streets were narrow, the houses high, and mostly of wood. All the materials requisite for a disastrous fire were present in abundance, and a high wind blowing in the dangerous direction completed the catastrophe. The fire raged for a week, and was only conquered at last by tearing down many acres of buildings. More than half the city was destroyed.

By this time Nero had lost any popularity he had, and the maddened populace did not hesitate to accuse him of having burned the city. Ancient historians, writing years after the event, whilst expressing doubt, have not hesitated to repeat the accusation; and modern historians, believing that nothing too bad could be said of this emperor, have kept the accusation alive. Poets have made it picturesque, and every schoolboy knows that Nero fiddled whilst Rome burned.

There is already so much to say to the discredit of this unhappy man that there is no need to exaggerate, and it is a relief to know that this particular accusation is absolutely groundless. It would be just as true to say that Charles II. was responsible for the fire of London.

Apart from the absurdity of imagining that a king would deliberately impoverish himself by conniving at the destruction of his capital, it is absurd to think that such a conflagration could have been foreseen. Moreover, Nero was far away from Rome, at Antium, when the fire broke out, nor did he return until the third day, expecting news daily that the fire had been got under. When he reached Rome the flames were threaten-

ing his own palace. Instead of fiddling the emperor did his very best to extinguish the fire, driving about the city, encouraging all who were fighting the flames.

When the conflagration had ceased and thousands were homeless, Nero did all he could to relieve distress, placing the public buildings and imperial gardens at the disposal of the people, erecting temporary shelters, and distributing corn at a nominal price. Nero's action in connection with the fire is the one thing which should be placed to his credit, and it is a pity that so much credence should have been given to calumny.

But though the accusation against the emperor was false, the idea that the fire was due to incendiarism had taken possession of the minds of the people and a scapegoat had to be provided. For some reason which has never been fully explained suspicion fell upon the Christians. The position of Christianity in Rome was at this time most interesting. It seems likely that the Apostle Paul came to Rome about 62 A.D. and his trial before Nero perhaps took place in 63 A.D., or in the beginning of 64 A.D. It resulted in a verdict of not proven, and the apostle was released. Probably he was travelling when the fire took place in 64. All is indefinite, and the meagreness of the information may easily be accounted for. The fire was followed by bitter persecution, and Christians would scarcely dare to commit their thoughts to writing at such a time.

Our information concerning this beginning of systematic persecution of Christianity in the Roman Empire comes from the pens of Tacitus and other heathen writers. The passage in Tacitus in which he explains how Nero, in order to divert suspicion from himself, allowed it to fall upon the Christians is as follows:—

"With this view he inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. They derived their name and origin from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death, by the sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate.

"For a time this dire superstition was checked; but it again burst forth, and not only spread itself over Judæa, the first seat of this mischievous sect, but was even introduced into Rome, the common asylum which receives and protects whatever is impure, whatever is atrocious. The confessions of those who were seized, discovered a great multitude of their accomplices, and they were all convicted, not so much for the crime of setting fire to the city as for their hatred of human kind. They died in torments, and their torments were embittered by insult and derision. Some were nailed on crosses; others sewn in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs; others again, smeared over with combustible materials, were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night.

"The gardens of Nero were destined for this melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied by a horse-race, and honoured with the presence of the emperor, who mingled with the populace in the dress and attitude of a charioteer.

"The guilt of the Christians deserved, indeed, the most exemplary punishment, but the public abhorrence was changed into commiseration, from the opinion that those unhappy wretches were sacrificed, not so much to the public welfare, as to the cruelty of a jealous tyrant" (*Annals*, bk. xv., chap. xliv.).

Tacitus was a child of six years when the persecution of the Christians took place. He began writing late in life, so that half a century lay between the events and his description. Concerning the main facts of the persecution there can unfortunately be no doubt. They are abundantly vouched for by the statements of other writers. But in matters of opinion Tacitus can be freely criticised. He was certainly wrong in his estimate of the Christians, concerning whose real character and faith he could have been at no pains to inquire. He may have been equally far wrong in believing that Nero deliberately singled out the Christians as scapegoats to bear away suspicion from himself. It is very likely that the emperor had scarcely heard their name before.

Perhaps in the course of police investigation suspicion was

cast upon the new sect. They met in secret; they worshipped one who had been executed as a criminal; they refused to attend public assemblies where the emperor was worshipped; they must be misanthropes, enemies of mankind. Strange stories were rife as to what they did in their assemblies; they were suspected of being cannibals and worse. In China in the present day Christian missionaries have been suspected of doing horrible things, and even in civilised Europe Jews have been accused of mixing their passover cakes with the blood of babes. Need we wonder if the Roman populace, at that time as degraded as any populace could well be, easily believed the foulest lies concerning this new sect which was everywhere spoken against.

Though we may doubt whether Nero had anything to do with the original charge against the Christians, he certainly took advantage of it and made no effort to clear them. If he did not find the scapecoat himself it suited him that a scapecoat should be found. Accordingly the most law-abiding, virtuous, tender-hearted people in the Roman Empire were cruelly persecuted and done to death.

We have mentioned that the Apostle Paul was in Rome before the fire. He had to stand his trial on the appeal from the court of Festus, and the verdict was *non liquet* (not proven). Afterwards Paul was set free and travelled, probably visiting Spain amongst other places. After the fire he was again arrested, and on two charges it is believed. For being concerned in the conflagration, and for bringing confusion into the Roman Empire by the introduction of a new religion. The first charge was easily disproved, but Paul knew that the second would mean death. It was when he was remanded and waiting the trial upon this charge that he wrote the very pathetic Second Epistle to Timothy:—

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:"

"Do thy diligence to come before winter"

Alas, the trial came on sooner than the apostle expected, and long before winter he was with his Lord. As he had expected the second charge proved fatal. Paul was condemned, and lest there might be a disturbance if he were executed within the city he was taken by soldiers outside Rome, and there beheaded.

With regard to the Apostle Peter there is no certainty at all. He may have gone to Rome about the time that Paul died. The sad plight of the Christians would have attracted a man like Peter. Perhaps he was crucified on the Janiculum, as tradition asserts, in the very end of Nero's reign.

After the fire Nero rebuilt Rome in a much more enduring fashion. Stone was used instead of timber, the streets were made broader and straighter, and every "insula" of houses was surrounded by an open colonnade. Arrangements were made for a better water supply. The expense was met by heavy taxation on Italy and the provinces.

Nero also built a new palace, afterwards called the Golden House. The palace covered a vast area, having magnificent gardens, woods and lakes. Before its entrance there was erected a statue of the emperor 120 feet high. Temples were pillaged in order to find funds and to supply the palace with works of art. Rome had a large percentage of poor folk amongst its inhabitants and the building of the Golden House caused doubtless a good deal of discontent.

During the reigns of Claudius and Nero there was much war between Rome and Parthia, the bone of contention being Armenia. Roman territory and administration extended to the frontiers of Armenia, and it seemed necessary to maintain the Roman ascendency in that land. At the commencement of Nero's reign the matter had reached an acute stage. The Parthian king Vologeses occupied Armenia and provoked war. Corbulo, the Roman general, recovered the country, but it was lost again. At last a compromise was effected. The 66.

crown of Armenia was given to Tiridates, brother of the Parthian king, who came to Rome and was formally invested in the Forum with his authority by Nero, the Roman emperor.

65. The year after the great fire saw the upspringing of a serious conspiracy against Nero. It is known as the conspiracy of Piso, because C. Calpurnius Piso was the man chosen by the conspirators to fill Nero's place. The emperor was now so unpopular that the conspiracy seemed likely to succeed, and many nobles joined it. But the secret leaked out.

The discovery of the Piso conspiracy ushered in a reign of terror, in the course of which the innocent suffered with the guilty. Seneca was one of the first to fall. Whether he was really implicated in the conspiracy or not we cannot say, but his name had been mentioned as a possible successor along with the name of Piso.

This year also Poppæa died. It is said that her death was brought on by a kick given by Nero in a fit of passion or, perhaps more probably, of drunkenness. She was embalmed, honoured with a public funeral and buried in the royal sepulchre. At a later period the Senate decreed that Divine honours should be paid to her and a temple was dedicated to her memory.

66. Next year Nero paid Greece a long visit. The four great games at Olympia, Delphi, Isthmus and Nemea, which were celebrated in successive years, were crowded into one year for his sake. He competed in music and chariot racing, and won prizes. It would have been better for Nero's dignity if he had not competed, but there really was no harm in his going to Greece and patronising the national sports. They were infinitely more respectable than the gladiatorial sports to which the Romans were accustomed. Nero's artistic tastes were genuine and he had a sincere admiration for the Greeks.

During the emperor's absence from Rome, Helius, a freedman, governed in his stead. This was displeasing to the nobles and there was discontent. Rumours came also of discontent in the western provinces and even in the armies.

Helius hurried to Greece and advised the emperor to return at once if he would save his power. Nero accordingly returned 68. and made a triumphal entry into Rome. But the triumph was short lived.

Nero had many enemies and few friends. The reign of terror after the discovery of the Piso conspiracy had made many long for revenge, and when once the spirit of revolt spread to the armies it became merely a question who would take the lead.

The standard of revolt was raised first by Vindex, a Romanised Celt, governor of part of Gaul. He collected a huge force in Gaul. It was undisciplined and he saw that without regular troops to help him he must fail. Accordingly he asked the help of Galba, the governor of Hither Spain. After some hesitation Galba also rebelled. But before there was time for him to take the field news came to him that Vindex had been defeated and slain.

Galba's position now seemed desperate. All Rome knew of his defection, Nero had seized his property and an expedition was being prepared for his overthrow. Perceiving that his only chance of safety lay in instant action, he harangued his troops, expatiated on the crimes of Nero, was saluted imperator and marched towards Rome. But it was a long way from Hither Spain, and had Nero been a man of decision and courage he could yet perhaps have saved himself. The Prætorian guards were still faithful to him, but, whilst he delayed, emissaries from Galba made them such vast promises that they threw him up. The sentries left the palace, his attendants deserted him, and at length, accompanied by four freedmen only, he left Rome. One of the freedmen, Phaon, offered refuge in his villa in the suburbs and there he lay hid. At last, hearing that Galba had been proclaimed as emperor and that the sentence of death had been passed on himself, he escaped the vengeance of his enemies by suicide.

Nero's remains were treated respectfully. The body was cremated and the ashes buried in the Domitian sepulchre on

the Pincian Hill. The hatred of the senators followed him after death. His very statues were overthrown. But the common people pitied him; they forgot his faults, they remembered only how open-handed he had been, and his grave was covered annually with wreaths of flowers.

CHAPTER X.

A WAR OF SUCCESSION.

THE Julian line ceased with Nero. The family, natural and adopted, had claimed the allegiance of the Roman people for more than a century and had obtained a hold upon their affections and imagination. Julius and Augustus had been deified, and their worship cast a glory over their descendants. However bad the emperor might be he was descended from a god, and ruled by divine right.

On the whole the men had done their work well. It is inevitable but unfortunate that history should have to make so much of the king and so little of the people. One is apt to imagine that during the reigns of men like Gaius and Nero all must have been confusion in the empire. It was not so. The excesses of the emperors made little difference to the stability of the empire. Rome was excited at times. But the provinces were tranquil, and the empire was prosperous as a whole. What the people in the provinces heard of Nero's conduct may not have satisfied them. But he was a Cæsar, and they looked indulgently upon him. The wise amongst them knew that the alternative was anarchy. Better have a bad Cæsar than none at all.

Such was the hold that the Cæsarean house had obtained upon the public mind that it is probable that if Nero had begotten a son the people would have bestowed the imperium upon him. But he had none, and a change of dynasty was inevitable.

The actual decision lay with the soldiers. Had these been of one mind all would have been well. But this was far from

being the case, and the result was a war of succession which, though it lasted but a twelvemonth, saw four emperors upon the throne, and plunged Italy into civil strife.

There were important armies in Gaul, Spain, on the Rhine, and in Syria. There were also the household troops in Rome. The Gallic army had shot its bolt and missed, and Galba had won the guards over to his side.

When Galba heard of Nero's death, he assumed the title of emperor, and the Senate recognised him and sent a deputation. Galba was an able man. He had filled various public offices. He was wealthy and of good family. Had he been a younger man he might have held his own. But he was over seventy years of age, and not brilliant in any way.

68. As Galba marched towards Rome he allowed his path to be stained with bloodshed. When approaching the city itself his troops attacked and slew some marines who were stationed at a bridge. They were Nero's soldiers, but he was dead, and the men could have had no serious thought of resisting Galba's progress. His severity, therefore, produced a bad impression in Rome.

Promises of huge donatives had been made to the Prætorian guards in the name of Galba. He did not fulfil them, in fact he could not. The treasury was empty, and the sums promised had been absurdly high. But it is easy to see how such a failure would operate on the minds of the soldiers, and how they would be alienated at a time when their help was of the very first importance.

Money was necessary, and Galba had to find it, but his financial measures were weakly conceived. He tried to make all those who had profited by Nero's liberality disgorge their wealth. This was a particularly unwise measure. Galba made little money out of it, for with most of Nero's friends it had been a case of "light come light go". But the measure implicated many and alarmed more. If these matters were to be gone into, where would it end? The contrast between Nero's open-handedness and Galba's meanness was quickly

pointed out. In a word it was not easy for an old soldier of seventy to learn the art of government in a day.

In the hope of making the task of government lighter, Galba associated Piso Licinianus with himself. Piso was of noble family, and little could be urged against him. But he was not a popular man, and his unpopularity reacted upon Galba. The choice was to the emperor a source of weakness, rather than strength. Moreover it offended a man of some importance. This was Otho, the former husband of Poppæa, who was again in Rome. He had returned from Lusitania deeply in debt, and willing to do any desperate deed for the sake of mending his fortunes. He had supported Galba from the first, and had hoped to be associated with him, and perhaps be eventually his successor. This hope was now taken away, and Otho determined to act on his own account. He easily corrupted the guards, among whom he had many friends. Galba's failure to pay the donative had exasperated them, they mutinied, Galba and Piso were slain, and Otho was declared emperor.

Galba had reigned for but six months, Otho reigned but 69.
about three. Even whilst he was compassing the destruction of Galba there was a rival in the field. The legions in Gaul and Spain had tried their hands at creating an emperor, and the legions in Germany saw no reason why they should not do the same. Accordingly the soldiers refused to take the oath of allegiance to Galba, and saluted their own general Vitellius as imperator. Vitellius himself was not at all keen about the position. He had received his appointment as general from Galba, and did not desire to be unfaithful to his trust, and news of Galba's death had not yet reached his camp. Moreover, he was an easy-going, indolent and sensual man, who preferred ease to ambition. Really he was suited neither for the post of general nor that of emperor. But his subordinate officers, especially Cæcina and Valens, would take no denial, and he allowed himself to be persuaded.

The legions advanced upon Rome in three sections. Cæ-

cina with one army marched through Gaul, Valens marched through Helvetia, Vitellius himself followed with the main body.

Before the armies reached Italy they heard that Galba was dead and that Otho had succeeded him. This made the legions more eager than ever, and perhaps quieted certain qualms of conscience in the breast of Vitellius. Whatever claims to allegiance Galba might have had, Otho had none. Accordingly the armies pressed forward.

Otho knew that the Germanic legions were formidable, and made overtures to his rival, offering him anything in reason if he would retire. Vitellius would perhaps have acceded, but his soldiers would not hear of any drawing back, and the war went on.

The armies encountered each other at Placentia, and in the first engagements Otho's forces were successful. Otho himself showed great energy, and for a time it seemed as if the contest would be decided in his favour. But the forces of Vitellius were coming up in increasing numbers all the time, and at last Otho's legions were defeated with great loss. Even then there seemed no need to relinquish the struggle. His soldiers were still faithful, the Prætorian guards had scarcely been in action, reserves were coming from Illyricum. But Otho lost heart, or possibly lost confidence in his generals, and finished the matter by suicide.

In Rome the death of Otho brought about a feeling of relief. All dreaded civil war being brought near the city, and hoped that they would now escape. The Senate accordingly met and elected Vitellius as emperor without further question.

With all his indolence Vitellius had common sense, and his administration was not unsatisfactory. He endeavoured to conciliate the Senate, checked processes for treason, and disturbed the arrangements made by his predecessors as little as he could. His generals, Cæcina and Valens, had, however, an undue influence in the affairs of state. It was through their efforts that Vitellius had obtained his position, and they made

the most of their opportunity. Nevertheless, had Vitellius been left alone he might have risen to the occasion as many another has done, and ended by giving a good account of his stewardship. But this was not to be.

There had been much stir amongst the legions in Syria and Judæa. At first they seemed to care little what happened at Rome. They accepted Galba, and they accepted Otho with indifference, and even when Vitellius became emperor they accepted him though without enthusiasm. The character of the man was known, and they doubtless thought that a better might have been chosen. When, however, the news came that Galba had been nominated by the legions in Spain, that Otho had been nominated by the Prætorian guard, and that Vitellius had been nominated by the legions on the German frontier, they had searchings of heart. Why should they be left out in the cold; why should not they also set up a king? Doubtless they believed that all these other legions had been richly rewarded by their nominees, whilst they had received nothing.

The choice of the Eastern legions fell first upon Mucianus, the proconsul of Syria, but he refused; upon which they turned to Titus Flavius Vespasianus, the legatus of Judæa. He was a man of humble origin, who had risen high by sheer merit. He had distinguished himself in Britain in the reign of Claudius. During the reign of Nero a serious rebellion had broken out in Judæa and Vespasian had been entrusted with the task of suppressing it. When Nero died Vespasian ceased hostilities for a time. It was desirable that he should have the approval of his successor before he proceeded much farther.

Vespasian was widely and favourably known, and when once the suggestion was made that he should be emperor the armies of the East adopted it with enthusiasm. But Vespasian was cautious, and did not accept the position until both Mucianus, the proconsul of Syria, and Tiberius Alexander, the prefect of Egypt, urged it and promised their support. When he knew that Egypt, from which Rome had her corn supply, was on his side he hesitated no longer. Tiberius Alexander proclaimed

69. him emperor at Alexandria, and the Judæan legions did the same at Cæsarea. Mucianus, who had refused the supreme power himself, threw all his strength on the side of Vespasian, and the vassal kings of the East gave in their adhesion.

In a council at Berytus the campaign against Vitellius was planned. It was decided that Vespasian should occupy Egypt, and thus obtain possession of the food supply of Rome, that his son Titus should succeed him as legatus in Judæa, and that Mucianus should march on Rome.

The army of Mucianus was not large, less than 25,000 men, but he expected to be joined by the Illyric legions, who had been loyal to Otho and were intensely hostile to his successor. Mucianus marched slowly. He knew that the German legions were formidable, and he hoped that by moving slowly he might avoid bloodshed. The stoppage of the food supplies would have a great effect at Rome, perhaps even cause a revolution. But all his cautious planning was upset by the enthusiasm of the Illyric legions. These were under the command of Antonius Primus, a dashing and impetuous officer who determined to take Italy by surprise. He would not wait for the Eastern forces, therefore, but marched at once and quickly. His judgment was justified by results, for he overcame all opposition, gained a decisive victory over the forces of Vitellius at Betriacum, and captured Cremona. The town indeed capitulated, but the soldiers paid no respect to the capitulation and burned it to the ground.

Vitellius had entrusted the command of his armies to Cæcina and Valens. Cæcina played him false; Valens was too slow. He lost all his chances and at last fled. He took refuge in Gaul, but the procurator of that country had declared for Vespasian and Valens was captured and beheaded.

The Vitellians now saw that the struggle was becoming hopeless. The legions of the Western provinces, Britain, Spain and Gaul declared for Vespasian. The East was already his and Italy was divided.

Vitellius saw that his cause was lost, and when Primus

offered him a safe retreat in Campania and Mucianus confirmed the offer by letter; he would readily have agreed; but there were now two parties in Rome, the Flavians and the Vitellians. The Flavians espoused the cause of Vespasian and demanded that his terms should be accepted; the Vitellians, amongst whom were many soldiers of the Prætorian guard, were perfectly irreconcilable. They would not hear of yielding and took care that Vitellius should not escape. Fierce riots ensued, and the Capitol was burned to the ground. In the midst of the tumult Primus reached Rome and his forces broke into the city, driving its defenders before them. There was prolonged street fighting and terrible slaughter. Then the Prætorian camp was stormed. Fifty thousand men are said to have fallen, and amongst them was the emperor.

For a time Rome was in the hands of the soldiery and was treated as a conquered city. But Mucianus arrived and took control. All licence was now sternly repressed, the Senate met in proper form, and the imperium was conferred upon Vespasian by the usual decrees.

This had been indeed an eventful year. It has been called the year of the four emperors, for within a twelvemonth Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian had ruled in Rome. It was a striking object lesson to the empire on the merits of dynastic succession as opposed to military nomination. Between the succession of Augustus and the death of Nero a century had elapsed, and but five monarchs had reigned. They were not perfect. Two of them, Gaius and Nero, had been very imperfect indeed. But they had succeeded to one another without civil war, and the machinery of state started by Augustus had kept moving whether the ruler were good or bad.

Now for the moment dynastic succession had failed, and with what result? Rome had seen four emperors in twelve months, and both country and capital had been plunged into all the horrors of a destructive civil strife. The principle of dynastic succession might not work to perfection, but it was manifestly better than the alternative.

CHAPTER XI.

VESPASIAN.

69. TITUS FLAVIUS VESPASIANUS, with whom began the second imperial dynasty, was one of the most useful of Roman emperors. Not that he was either a very great or a very clever man. But he was a strong man, and at this time a strong man was sorely needed at Rome.

Vespasian was a man of the people and proud of it. A solid, squarely built man, fond of rough humour, impervious to flattery, accessible to all. A good soldier and a good administrator. There have been many United States Presidents of the same stamp.

The elevation of a man of humble birth to the supreme position in the State was a new thing in Rome. Hitherto the emperors had been aristocrats. From Julius Cæsar to Nero they had been of the same distinguished family. After Nero it had been much the same thing. Galba was a patrician; Otho of good Etruscan family; Vitellius the son of a senator and grandson of a knight.

Vespasian was a Sabine. His grandfather had collected small debts; his father had been in the customs. It was a great change for the Romans to have such an one emperor, the forerunner of greater changes that were to come.

The new emperor did not at once come to Rome. Vitellius was slain on the 21st of December, 69, and Vespasian did not reach Rome until the summer of 70. Before he arrived the Senate had begun to rebuild the Capitol. It was on the foundations of the old one, but was raised to a greater height.

During Vespasian's reign there were serious revolts among the Batavians and the Jews.

The Batavians lived on the Delta of the Rhine, in a part of what is called the Netherlands. They were excellent soldiers and had been greatly used as auxiliaries by the Roman generals. They were capital swimmers, and when Plautius was invading Britain it was Batavians who swam across the Thames and turned the British flank.

During Nero's reign two of their principal officers, Julius Civilis and Claudius Paulus, had been accused of treason. Paulus was executed by the governor of Lower Germany, Civilis was sent to Rome and thrown into prison. When Nero fell Galba released him. Then followed the death of Galba and soon thereafter the death of Otho.

The Batavians helped Vitellius in his war against Otho, but when the struggle between Vitellius and Vespasian followed they supported Vespasian. Civilis was now amongst them and at their head. Acting at first in the name of Vespasian, he roused not only his own people but the troops of Germany and Gaul. Soon he had a formidable army at his command and the generals sent against him by Vitellius were easily overthrown.

When Vitellius perished and Vespasian had been declared emperor the war should have ceased. But the Batavians and Gauls had many grievances, and even longed for their old independence. It was easier to induce them to take up arms than to persuade them to lay them down. The effort on behalf of Vespasian now became a revolt and spread until much of Gaul was involved. Beginning against Vitellius, it was now directed against Rome and there was talk of a Gallic empire.

Had there been perfect harmony between the Batavians and the Gauls the revolt would have been serious indeed, but, fortunately for Rome, there was much jealousy between them. The Batavians were just as little inclined to be the subjects of a Gallic empire as they were to be the subjects of Rome. Accordingly when Vespasian sent Cerealis with a large army to crush the revolt he succeeded, though not without difficulty. Civilis made good terms for his people, and Vespasian, remembering how the revolt began, wisely let bygones be bygones.

When Vespasian was nominated as emperor he was engaged in quelling a revolt in Judæa. The Jews had long been considered a trouble in the empire. The religious views to which they held with such tenacity brought them into frequent collision with the civil power. It was not easy for a free-thinking Roman governor to understand why Jews should make so much fuss about their particular form of religion, should refuse to worship dead emperors and to place statues of living ones in their synagogues. Nor did the Jews make it any easier for the Romans than they could help. They thought it a disgraceful thing to be under the heel of idolaters, and were generally in a condition of unrest. Thus both principle and prejudice combined to make the Jews difficult subjects, and only the wisest of governors could prevent disturbance. On the other hand, any unscrupulous official could bring the Jews almost at any moment into collision with the Roman power.

During the reign of Tiberius when Pontius Pilate was governor there had been tumult and massacre in Judæa. In the reign of Gaius matters became worse, for the emperor ordered that his statue should be placed in the Holy of Holies, and civil war was only prevented by his death.

During the reign of Nero, the disaffection was widespread, tumults were incessant, and Jews were massacred in many cities. In Alexandria, Tiberius Alexander, the governor, himself of the Jewish race, is said to have slaughtered tens of thousands of them. At Cæsarea 20,000 are said to have been slain.

In Jerusalem the Jews were in a great majority, and, maddened by the reports which were brought from other places, they rose against their enemies and defeated them with great slaughter, cutting the Roman garrison to pieces.

Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, now marched upon Jerusalem with 30,000 men, but the fortifications were too strong for him, and he had to retreat with heavy loss. After his defeat the rebellion spread quickly, and soon the whole country was in the hands of the insurgents.

The news of these untoward events reached Nero when he was in Greece, and he saw that the crisis demanded the utmost energy. Accordingly he sent Vespasian, who had the reputation of being one of the best officers in the Roman army, with full power to deal with the matter.

Vespasian entered Palestine with 50,000 men and deferred an advance upon the capital until he had recovered the country. He proceeded slowly, capturing the cities one by one.

Perhaps Vespasian's most memorable siege was that of Jotapata in which Josephus, the famous Jewish historian, figured. The siege lasted forty-five days, and Josephus, who was in command, escaped with his life. He was taken into favour by Vespasian and used as an ambassador in his communications with the Jews. He took the name of his patron Titus Flavius Josephus.

After the death of Nero, Vespasian suspended military operations, waiting probably until his instructions were confirmed by Galba. When afterwards he was himself proclaimed emperor, he left Titus, his elder son, who had been his right hand during the war, to finish the task.

In the spring of the year Titus marched upon Jerusalem. The city was torn by faction. There were three main parties; there had been much bloodshed and confusion reigned. But when Titus approached all united against the common foe.

The Roman army was of vast size, numbering 100,000 men, one of the finest armies Rome had ever placed in the field.

The city was thronged with people from all parts. Many persons, driven from their homes in the surrounding districts, had hurried to the capital for refuge. It was also the time of the passover, a time when Jerusalem was always crowded. No adequate stores had been laid in for a siege, and the Jews would have been well advised had they yielded upon almost any terms. But this was far from their thoughts, and Titus encompassed the city with his army.

The siege lasted for five terrible months. Greater misery than that endured by the inhabitants of Jerusalem during

[illegible] rarely been recorded in the history of mankind. The desperate wild-cat courage which rarely fails the Semitic race when driven to bay, which fought at Tyre against Alexander the Great, and at Carthage against Rome, was now displayed at Jerusalem.

Had the Jews been united, and had the city been properly prepared and provisioned for a siege, the Romans might have been baulked in the end. But overcrowded and unprovisioned as it was it could not long resist the fury of the Roman assault. Breaches were made, walls were scaled, and then house by house, street by street, quarter by quarter, the city was taken and destroyed. The number of victims we can only guess at. Josephus declares that over a million perished. If we divide his figures in half they are yet terrible. Herod's temple, the wonder of the world, was burned to the ground, and the city was heaped in ruin.

The destruction of Jerusalem, and perhaps especially the destruction of the temple by Titus, was a blow from which Jewish nationality never recovered. For a thousand years Jerusalem had been the Jewish centre, and every stone was precious in their sight. It was now levelled with the dust. Many Jews still clung to Palestine, and efforts were made to rebuild the city. In the time of Hadrian the Jewish population had so greatly increased in Judæa that they were able to carry on a warfare with the Roman armies for three years. Once more they were crushed, and once more Jerusalem was ground to powder. A Roman legion encamped on its ruins, and the Jews were forbidden even to dwell in its vicinity.

The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus did not of itself scatter the Jewish race. Jerusalem has been often destroyed, and the Jewish race has been often scattered. It is a common complaint made by Jews when they are reproached because their fathers crucified Christ that their fathers had left Jerusalem centuries before the dawn of the Christian era. This is true, yet every Jewish heart turned towards Jerusalem, the temple was there, it was the common home of their race.

This feeling must now, for many centuries at least, be at an end. Jerusalem indeed was rebuilt, but the temple was never rebuilt, and the city itself has since been a pagan centre, a Christian centre, and a Moslem centre, but never again a Jewish centre. The destruction of the temple by Titus, and the double destruction of the city by Titus and Hadrian were final. The Jews were crushed in the centre of their religious and national life, and did not again rally round a common purpose. They accepted their cruel fate, and went forth wanderers, found everywhere, yet everywhere "a people dwelling alone, and not reckoned among the nations".

After the revolts in Gaul and Judæa had been quelled, the reign of Vespasian was peaceful and the empire prospered. Rome had not yet recovered from the great fire, nor had the treasury recovered from the extravagance of Nero and the waste of civil war. Vespasian had therefore to face serious financial difficulties, but he faced them with resolution. He had to increase taxation, and he exacted a strict account from the tax collectors. But he showed a good example by himself living a frugal life and curtailing the expenses of court.

Vespasian paid special attention to the guarding of the frontiers, and thus gave his successors an example which several of them followed. The idea of world-wide empire was unpopular now, and Rome aimed chiefly at preventing aggression. Vespasian reorganised the Danubian flotilla, and moved the camping ground of the legions to the river bank. Farther north he began a line of fortifications on the eastern side of the Rhine. Adventurous Gauls had taken possession of waste lands across the river. They were outside the province, but paid tithe to Rome. Vespasian began to build a wall for their protection, and Domitian completed it. On the eastern frontier Vespasian made Cappadocia a kind of county palatine, placing it under the command of a legate of consular rank, who had the task of defending the upper Euphrates.

Himself a provincial, Vespasian sympathised with the provinces, and improved the status of the towns and municipali-

ties. Many of these had been formed under the *lex Julia municipalis*, a law passed by Julius Cæsar.

During Vespasian's reign the Imperial position became better defined. The title of "Imperator Cæsar Augustus" was made common to the emperors. The claims of hereditary descent were appreciated and more fully recognised. Vespasian fortunately had two sons old enough to succeed him, Titus and Domitian. The heir apparent took the name of Cæsar, his head appeared with that of the emperor upon the coinage, and his name was associated with his in public prayer. The theory that the king should never die was beginning to be understood.

The old system of dual control between emperor and Senate was now largely ignored. The powers of the magistrates in Rome fell mostly into the hands of the prefect of the city, and of the prefect of the guard, both of whom were appointed by the emperor. The emperor still used the decrees of the Senate (*senatus consulta*) as convenient instruments of legislation, but they were merely his own decrees, introduced in an imperial speech and formally acclaimed by them.

The senatorial order itself was changed. Vespasian admitted men of merit to the Senate freely, and his successors followed his example. Thus the old families who had been such a source of trouble throughout Roman history became less powerful. The Roman aristocracy became now more like the aristocracy of England at the present time. Wealth, influence, faithful service, legal knowledge and the like were the keys which opened the senatorial door.

Vespasian found economy necessary, and was therefore accused of meanness. But he was not mean. Many important works were begun and carried out during his reign. The great fire had provided abundant opportunity for the erection of new public buildings, and Vespasian took advantage of it. The words "Roma resurgens" are found on coins of this reign.

The most famous of Vespasian's buildings is the Colosseum. In early times the theatres had been built of wood. One had

been built of stone, but burned down in the great fire. Vespasian began, Titus carried on, and Domitian completed the vast amphitheatre which, even in ruin, is still the most impressive sight in Rome. In its perfect state it accommodated 90,000 spectators. The great public buildings known as the baths of Titus were also begun by Vespasian.

Vespasian had his enemies, and conspiracies were formed against him. He crushed them but without undue severity. When advised to pass more severe sentences he said: "I do not kill dogs that bark at me".

Vespasian's good humour rarely forsook him. When the king of Parthia wrote him, loftily inscribing his letter, "Arsaces, King of Kings, to Titus Flavius Vespasianus," the Roman emperor replied, "Titus Flavius Vespasianus to Arsaces, King of Kings".

Vespasian was an indefatigable worker, never sparing himself. In his seventieth year, feeling his health failing, he revisited the home of his boyhood, a little town in the Sabine hills. But he got a chill and came back worse. Though he realised that death was approaching he went on with his work. "An emperor," he said, "should die on his feet."

After his death a decree of the Senate consecrated him, as Julius, Augustus and Claudius had been consecrated. No one would have been more amused at it than Vespasian himself.

CHAPTER XII.

TITUS.

79. TITUS FLAVIUS SABINUS VESPASIANUS, commonly called Titus, now succeeded to the throne, his age being thirty-eight years. His father, Vespasian, had been a favourite with Claudius, and Titus was brought up in the imperial court and educated along with Britannicus. He is said to have been at the banquet early in Nero's reign when Britannicus was poisoned, and the curious ideas of the Romans with regard to poisoning actually led them to attribute his death twenty-five years later to the alleged fact that he had taken a sip from Britannicus' cup.

When a young man Titus served with credit as military tribune both in Britain and Germany. When Nero entrusted Vespasian with the subjugation of Judæa, Titus had command of a legion. When Vespasian was proclaimed emperor he left his son to finish the task, and especially the capture of Jerusalem. Titus carried out the work by sweeping the city from the face of the earth and slaying its inhabitants, man, woman and child. His conquest of Jerusalem gave him a great military reputation at Rome.

71. The year after the fall of Jerusalem Titus returned to Rome and joined his father in the customary triumph. Some years later the well-known Arch of Titus was built at Rome on the Via Sacra to commemorate the conquest of Jerusalem. The sculptures on the monument represent Jewish trophies, captives and the like.

Vespasian, following the example of Augustus with regard to Tiberius, admitted his son Titus to a share in the government of the empire. The proconsular imperium and the

tribunician power were bestowed upon him. Vespasian also made him prætorian prefect so that his share in the task of government was substantial, and his ultimate succession was assured.

Though the military reputation of Titus was high he was not at this time a favourite with the people of Rome. This was partly owing to the fact that he had brought with him a Jewish mistress from Judæa, Berenice, the sister of Agrippa. Both she and her brother were lodged in the palace, and it was said that Titus meant to marry her for his third wife. The Romans did not mind how many concubines Titus had, but they did not want a Jewess as empress, and the intended union gave dissatisfaction. Perceiving this, and doubtless influenced by his father's advice, Titus sent Berenice back to Judæa. After the death of Vespasian she returned to Rome, hoping that he might then marry her, but he declined. His life proved a short one and he did not again marry at all.

When Vespasian died Titus succeeded without demur. His 79.
reign had been looked for with some apprehension. He had been fond of dissipation, and it was feared that he might prove another Nero. But when he obtained power he braced himself up for a time. What might have happened had his reign been long continued we cannot tell; but it only lasted for two years.

Vespasian had governed Rome with rare ability. Realising the extraordinary importance of careful finance he had exercised strict control over the collection of the revenue and had seen that everything was carried out with economy. The extravagance of Nero had emptied the treasury, Vespasian had the task of refilling it. Of course he got little thanks, and has been handed down to posterity as a parsimonious emperor.

The reign of Titus was, whilst it lasted, a reaction against his father's policy. He exercised little control over the public officials, and they quickly fell back into their dishonest habits. The money which his father had left in the treasury he scattered with both hands. None ever went from his presence

empty away. His famous saying, "I have lost a day," was not uttered because during that day he had done no kind action, but because during that day he had bestowed no gift. Looked at in this light it loses much of its significance. It evidently never occurred to Titus that money raised by the taxation of the people was trust money, which should be earmarked for the business of the state and not lavished upon favourites. Nero also had begun like this, and had been a prime favourite whilst the money lasted, and Titus would also have remained a favourite, "the darling of the human race," just so long as the money lasted, and not a day longer. His popularity was based on no true foundation, he was building his house upon the sand. But he died before the treasury was quite empty, and bequeathed the unpopular task of refilling it to his successor.

Short though the reign of Titus was it contained within itself incidents of tragic importance. Scarcely had he succeeded to the purple when there was an extraordinary eruption of Vesuvius, an event of which recent circumstances have unhappily again reminded us. For centuries Vesuvius had been quiescent, so that it was looked upon as an extinct volcano. The mountain was covered with verdure, vineyards and villages abounded on its slopes. Nestling at its foot were several towns, of which Pompeii and Herculaneum were the most important. Virgil speaks of the beauty of the region, even yet one of the most enchanting places in the world.

Pompeii and Herculaneum were favourite resorts of the Roman aristocracy, the wealthy amongst them had villas there, built and ornamented luxuriously in the Greek fashion. The confidence of the residents had been rudely shaken sixteen
63. years before the date of the eruption by a serious earthquake, which did much mischief in Pompeii, and overturned some of its principal buildings. The private houses, being of lower height, were not much injured, and the disaster had passed from the minds of the people. Then all at once came the great eruption.

The description of the eruption has been preserved for us by Pliny the younger, who was an eye-witness. He was eighteen years of age at the time, and was staying at the house of his uncle Pliny the elder, a man famous for his painstaking work as a naturalist. The uncle was admiral of the imperial fleet which was stationed in the harbour of Misenum, and he dwelt in a villa on the Misenian promontory twenty miles distant from the summit of Vesuvius.

Whilst the uncle and nephew were sitting at their studies they noticed that a strange-looking cloud was hanging over Vesuvius, spreading out from a slender vertical stem in tree-like fashion. The uncle ordered his cutter to be manned at once and crossed to the mountain, but the nephew preferred not to leave the work on which he was engaged.

When the admiral arrived on the scene, he was met by crowds of fugitives, beseeching help to get to sea. He gave instructions that the largest vessels of the fleet should sail to the most dangerous points and stand by to save as many people as they could. There can be no doubt that Pliny, by this promptitude, saved many lives. The researches made so industriously have shown that comparatively few lives were lost in Herculaneum and Pompeii. Evidently the inhabitants of the towns and villages in proximity to the mountain took warning early and escaped in time. Many would go inland, some were carried away in private vessels, some in the vessels of the fleet.

Unfortunately though Pliny thus wisely provided for the escape of others, he himself fell a victim. It was really his own blame. Not dreaming how serious the eruption would be, he delayed unduly, passing the night at a friend's house which stood well within the dangerous circle. In the night matters became so alarming that the servants aroused him, and aided by torches, for the sky was densely overcast, they made their way to the shore. So close was the danger that they had to envelope their heads to protect them from the hot cinders. When they reached the shore no boat

31603

was visible and Pliny could go no farther. He lay down and the terrified servants deserted him. Three days afterwards his nephew found him lying dead. His face was calm and there were no signs of burning. He may have died from the effects of the poisonous gas which accompanies an eruption and sinks to the ground by its own weight. Or he may have died from ordinary heart failure. He was an old man and corpulent, and had been hurrying beyond his strength.

The direction of the wind carried the fire and cinders over the city of Pompeii, and it was buried under ashes to a depth of fifteen feet. Herculaneum perished in a different way. It was engulfed in streams of lava or liquid mud. More recent eruptions added to the depth of lava, so that the city was buried by a bed more than seventy feet thick.

After danger from the eruption had passed, the scene was visited by the former inhabitants in hope that something might be done to repair the damage. But the destruction had been complete, and the position of the cities could only be guessed from the landmarks. At last the cities became little more than legend.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, in sinking a well in the village of Resina, the excavators found mosaics, and suspected that they belonged to Herculaneum. Little more was done at that time, but about the middle of the century systematic exploration was begun. The city of Pompeii was comparatively easy of access, and from that time the work of discovery has gone on, both at Herculaneum and Pompeii. The museum at Naples abounds in interesting relics, and the discoveries made in the two cities have added greatly to our knowledge of the arts and habits of the Romans.

80. In the following year, that is, about six months after the eruption, there was another disaster; a terrible fire in Rome, which did almost as much damage as had been done by the fire during the reign of Nero. The Capitol, destroyed in the riots during the last days of Vitellius, and rebuilt by Vespasian, was again destroyed; the Pantheon also was burnt, and many

public buildings. It is noteworthy that though the former fire had been unhesitatingly laid to Nero's charge, no one dreamt of implicating Titus in this almost equally serious conflagration.

The fire was followed by a pestilence, and great numbers of the people died. The pestilence was attributed by some of the Romans to noxious gases wafted from Vesuvius during its eruption. This is, of course, absurd, seeing that Rome is a great distance from Vesuvius, and that the eruption had taken place many months before. Doubtless the plague followed the fire because of the way in which the homeless people were huddled together, and the miserable sanitary conditions under which they lived.

As some professed to believe that these afflictions betokened the wrath of the gods, Titus sought to propitiate them. Accordingly he hurried on the building of the Colosseum, and dedicated it with games of extraordinary magnificence. The opening was premature, for the structure was not entirely finished until the time of Domitian his successor. How the games were to gratify the gods we do not know. Probably their propitiation was but an excuse, and the real reason was the desire to distract the minds of the people and lead them to forget their sorrows for a time. They had been greatly tried by the fire and the plague.

The games included many gladiatorial combats, in some of which women took part. Five thousand wild animals were slaughtered, and the games lasted for three months. There were several dramatic representations, including one descriptive of the siege of Syracuse. There was also a sea fight, for which the arena was filled with water. Vast gifts of food were distributed to the people after the performances. The idea of distracting the minds of the people was doubtless benevolent, but it would have been wiser had Titus refrained from thus wasting the national resources.

Shortly after these events Titus died. He was not a strong man, and the hardships of war and, it is to be feared,

the inroads of dissipation ruined his constitution. He tried many physicians, but all were in vain. He died under forty years of age, having reigned but two years and two months.

One thing must be mentioned to the credit of Titus. When he ascended the throne he determined that he would not inflict capital punishment upon Roman citizens, and during his short reign he kept his word. It is a pity that his tenderness of heart did not lead him also to discountenance gladiatorial exhibitions.

The worst feature of the government of Titus was its wastefulness. Another year would have made him bankrupt: then would have come taxation, oppression, recrimination. It was well for his reputation that he died comparatively young.

CHAPTER XIII.

DOMITIAN.

TITUS FLAVIUS DOMITIANUS AUGUSTUS, the younger son of St. Vespasian, now ascended the throne. He was thirty years of age, and had already shared some of the dangers that surround a throne. When his father was proclaimed emperor by the legions in the East he was resident in Rome and narrowly escaped being murdered by the Vitellians. During the riots which followed he took refuge in the Capitol with his uncle and some other relatives. When the Capitol was stormed his uncle was slain, but he hid in a porter's hut and escaped.

When the Illyrian legions arrived and Vitellius was overthrown Domitian was greeted as Cæsar and installed in the palace, but Primus, the commander of the legions, kept the power in his own hands. Shortly afterwards Mucianus arrived and governed in the name of Vespasian. Domitianus was only eighteen years of age at the time, and was put on one side.

When the Batavian War was in progress Domitian was eager to obtain military employment, but Mucianus feared to interfere with Cerealis, the general who was conducting the operations against Civilis. Domitian was therefore permitted to accompany Mucianus to Lugdunum (Lyons), but had no military duties.

After his father returned to Rome Domitian was kept in the background, rather more perhaps than was necessary. Evidently Titus was Vespasian's favourite son. But there is no reason for affirming that Domitian was neglected. He was well educated, and received all the honour due to an emperor's son.

After Vespasian's death Domitian is said to have hoped

that Titus would recognise him officially as consort and ultimate successor. This may have been. But it seems hardly likely, as historians affirm, that he was bitterly disappointed because Titus did not do this at once. It was not usual for an emperor, himself comparatively young, to begin his reign by indicating his successor. After all, Titus was likely to marry again, and might have sons of his own. At any rate there was plenty of time. No one could have foreseen that the popular favourite would have so short a reign.

On the death of Titus, Domitian hastened to Rome and, having been approved by the Prætorian guards and accepted by the Senate, he succeeded unchallenged to the throne.

Domitian reigned for fifteen years, and reigned successfully. One would not gather this from some of the criticisms of his reign. Rarely has any emperor been more disparaged than Domitian. Pliny, Tacitus and the rest have treated his memory in the most venomous way, and modern historians have too readily accepted their verdict. Yet, putting aside malice, and judging Domitian purely by his actions, he will be found greatly superior in the virtues of kingship to his much-lauded brother, and worthy to stand, not in the first but certainly in the second rank of Roman emperors.

Domitian's enemies were amongst the members of the senatorial party, and they had substantial reasons for their hatred.

First, Domitian diminished their authority. There was a theory that the emperor could not elect a senator. This was the business of the censor and the censor's was a senatorial office. This was the theory, but the practice had long been otherwise. The emperor himself had been elected censor and had thus controlled the assembly. Claudius and Vespasian had been censors, and had elected and ejected whom they willed. But they so far regarded tradition as to lay down the censorship at the end of the year. Domitian made a new departure. He assumed the censorship for life. He could elect and eject, and the Senate was entirely in his power.

Next, the senatorial party hated Domitian because he seized their money. The extravagance of Titus had emptied the treasury. The war in Britain which had been for several years in progress, and the subsequent Dacian War were costly. The buildings destroyed in the great fire in the reign of Titus had to be rebuilt, and the games and distributions of food which were, unfortunately, so common in Rome had to be paid for. Where was the money to come from? The nobles had it. They were the landowners, the house owners, the slave dealers, the merchants, the money-lenders, not merely in Rome but throughout the empire. Much of their wealth had been obtained by robbing the poor. Seneca the philosopher, who was executed in the reign of Nero, was a millionaire, and had made his fortune lending money to wretchedly poor people in Britain at enormous interest. The revolt of the Iceni is said to have been due in some degree to his having suddenly called in his investments. Domitian preferred to plunder the classes rather than to increase the tribute and oppress the masses of the people. Hence some of their hatred.

The senatorial party had good reason to hate Domitian in the end because of his severity. The emperor had no son. He was the last of the Flavians, and the question of the succession became serious. For the moment Domitian solved the difficulty by patronising the infant sons of Flavius Clemens, his cousin, and letting it be understood that one of them would succeed him. But the nobles would have preferred one of themselves and began to conspire. L. Antonius Saturninus, the governor of Upper Germany, revolted. He was of noble 88.
family, and had accomplices among the senators. He induced two legions to proclaim him imperator, and sought help from the German tribes. Domitian went forth himself to suppress the revolt, but on his way learned that Saturninus had already been defeated and slain by Norbanus, a subordinate officer.

When the emperor returned to Rome he made strict inquiry into the Saturninian conspiracy, and found that many were involved. Several senators were executed and the leading

officers in the rebellious legions were put to death. Perhaps it was in accordance with law and with the custom of the time, but it would have been better for Domitian had he shown a more merciful spirit. If a man is caught red-handed killing him may be condoned, but to kill a man on suspicion of treason is to make a bitter enemy out of every member of his family.

Some part of the unpopularity of Domitian was owing to the fact that he made a serious effort to improve the morals of the metropolis. The condition of Rome was horrible, and the wealthy were the chief offenders. Domitian endeavoured to carry out laws, some of which had already been passed by Augustus, against the grosser forms of evil. Amongst the laws enforced were those against adultery and unnatural crime. In connection with the former Domitian had the courage to do what few have attempted, and punished both sexes equally. A vestal virgin was condemned and executed in accordance with the barbarous custom of the time. The partner of her guilt, a member of the knightly order, was scourged to death in the comitium. One can well imagine the anger of the young aristocracy at such even-handed justice.

Domitian also endeavoured to check the production of licentious plays and ballets upon the public stage. With performances in private houses he did not interfere. The emperor also made an earnest effort to put down the horrible practice of mutilating lads and making them eunuchs. This practice, one of the bye-products of polygamy, had been imported from the East, and was becoming prevalent in Rome. Domitian deserves great credit for discountenancing it.

The fire in Rome had rendered much rebuilding necessary. Domitian finished the Colosseum, rebuilt the Capitol, completed on a somewhat reduced scale the palace Nero had begun, created a Stadium in the Campus, and an Odeum for musical performances. He also built the Temple of Vespasian and Titus at the western end of the Forum. Some pillars of this temple are still standing.

The patronage of men of letters was a feature of Domitian's

reign. Under despotic rule thought is not free, and literature can flourish only on certain lines. This was very marked during the reign of Augustus. It is an incident of despotism even when the despot is benevolent. Nevertheless, in Domitian's reign literature was in a healthy state, and an effort was made to raise the standard of taste.

Among the literary men of the period were Quintilian, who wrote a sensible treatise on oratory, and Sextus Julius Frontinus, the eminent strategist, who wrote on engineering and military subjects. Two epic poets flourished during the reign, Silius Italicus and Papinius Statius. Another poet, Martial, a Spaniard by birth, wrote epigrammatic poetry. Domitian was the means of helping forward two men who afterwards became famous historians, Tacitus and Pliny the younger. Their historical work was done after his death, and they repaid his kindness by blackening his memory. Juvenal, the satirist, did some of his work during this reign.

The foreign policy of Domitian was successful. Its interest centred in Britain, and in the Rhenish and Danubian provinces.

We have seen how, in the reign of Claudius, Britain was subdued by Plautius as far west as Bath, as far north as Colchester. We have also seen how Ostorius Scapula carried the conquest somewhat farther, overthrowing the British leader, Caractacus, and sending him prisoner to Rome.

Suetonius Paulinus who became governor in the reign of 59.
Nero, set himself to further subdue the West. He established a Roman camp at Chester, and from thence subjugated North Wales and Anglesey. Whilst he was engaged in this work, the Iceni, an important tributary State on the eastern side of the island, revolted. The revolt was caused by oppressive tax-gathering and the ill-treatment of women, the usual sources of rebellion in conquered countries. The Iceni were led by Boadicea, widow of their late king. When this high-spirited woman dared to resist the robbery to which her estate was subjected, she was publicly flogged, and her daughters were outraged. She drove from tribe to tribe rallying her country-

men, and they rose in great numbers. At first they were successful. Colchester and other Roman cities were stormed, and for a moment they carried all before them. But when the Romans had concentrated their forces, discipline and superiority of weapons prevailed. The Britons were slaughtered in heaps, and Boadicea slew herself that she might not fall into the hands of the enemy.

The rebellion of the queen was not in vain. Suetonius was recalled, and his successors adopted conciliatory methods. Roads were built, Watling Street to the west, Ermine Street to the north, the roads crossing at Londinium. London, Colchester, Chester, Silchester, Cirencester, and other places began to develop. London gradually became an important commercial centre. The people began to prosper, and prosperity brought a measure of content.

During the reign of Vespasian, Cerealis, the general who had crushed the revolt of the Batavi, was sent to Britain. He extended the northern boundary as far as Lincoln. He was succeeded by Sextus Frontinus, and he again by Agricola.

Agricola governed Britain for seven years, retaining the confidence of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. Aspiring to subdue the whole of Britain, he pushed northward to the Tyne, and built a chain of forts between that river and the Solway. Then he went farther, moving along the east coast by the Firth of Forth. There for a time his progress northward was stayed, but he fortified the narrow neck between the Forth and the Clyde, and carried his arms westward to the extremest limits of Scotland. From Wigtonshire he sighted Ireland, and was most anxious to invade it. But when he applied to Domitian for another legion it was refused, and Ireland never became part of the Roman Empire.

Agricola then penetrated farther into Caledonia, marching by the east coast, supported by a fleet coasting round Fife. The Caledonians gathered their forces, and a pitched battle was fought with Galgacus their leader near Forfar or Brechin. The battle resulted as usual in a Roman victory.

After the battle, some part of Agricola's fleet sailed northward round the Pentland Firth, and as far as Cape Wrath. Having thus seen the extent of the island they returned by the same route to the Firth of Forth. They did not circumnavigate the island as some have thought.

Before his fleet returned Agricola had been recalled. Tacitus, who was Agricola's son-in-law, declares that the recall was owing to the jealousy of Domitian. The accusation is ridiculous. Agricola had been for seven years in Britain, an unusually long term of office. He had a large army, perhaps 30,000 men, and a fleet. His expenses were huge, and his campaigns barren. What profit was to be gained by long marches over Caledonian moors? The country was evidently poor, and the conquest of the whole would not add anything to the Roman exchequer. Domitian who had the greatest difficulty in finding money for pressing needs, determined to leave Caledonia alone. And his determination was wise. Agricola accepted his retirement with dignity, and it would have been better had his son-in-law done the same. 84.

Under Domitian the need for strengthening the defences along the Rhine and Danube was clearly perceived. Many Gauls had settled on the waste lands across the river. The districts thus occupied were called the *agri decumates* because the settlers paid a tithe of the produce of their fields to the Roman exchequer. They were subjected to attacks from the German tribes, and as they had no garrison, Vespasian tried to put their district upon a better footing for defence. He built roads, and also began a fortification on the eastern side similar to that used in Roman camps, a rampart and a ditch. Castella and watch towers were added.

Aided by the skill of Sextus Frontinus, Domitian extended and improved this line of defence. In furtherance of this object he made an expedition against the Chatti early in his reign. Members of that tribe were occupying districts which he wished to include within the rampart. The expedition was successful, the Chatti entering into a treaty which gave

him all that he desired. Much contempt was cast upon the expedition by the enemies of Domitian, but it was really of first-class importance. In connection with it Domitian built the first permanent Roman bridge over the Rhine.

After his campaigns on the Rhine Domitian had to attend to the Danubian frontier. Vespasian had improved the defences of this part of the empire somewhat, but they were still
85. insufficient. The Dacian king Decebalus crossed the Danube, and invaded Mœsia. Oppius Sabinus the Roman governor was slain and the land was ravaged. Domitian gave Cornelius Fuscus the Prætorian prefect the conduct of the war. He drove the enemy from Mœsia, and chased him into Dacia. But there the Dacians turned, and with great effect. The army was destroyed, and Fuscus was slain.

Julianus was sent by Domitian to retrieve the disaster. He defeated the Dacians with great loss, but when he would have carried the war to their very capital he was recalled by Domitian, who had determined to rest satisfied. He made a treaty with Decebalus, and by a little timely concession saved much trouble. As a result of the war the province was now divided into Upper and Lower Mœsia. Each section had its governor, and looked after its own defences. The peace with Dacia was kept for ten years.

The wars in Britain, with the Chatti, and with the Dacians prove Domitian to have been a man who did not fight for the mere pursuit of glory, but in order to attain some definite purpose. When the purpose was attained he went no farther.

In the last years of his reign relations between Domitian and the senatorial party became even more strained than before. The knowledge that they were plotting against him made him suspicious and cruel. Cruelty led to further plotting, and so the mischief grew. At length his wife Domitia, whom he had divorced because of a suspected intrigue, but afterwards recalled, formed a conspiracy against him in his own household and he was assassinated.

The Senate rejoiced greatly at the death of Domitian. His

statues and busts were torn down, his name was erased from all monuments, and he was refused decent burial. But neither the soldiers nor the people sympathised with these unworthy manifestations.

Rome had many worse rulers than Domitian. So far as we can judge by his actions he was capable and just. He knew that he was well hated by the nobility and cared little about it. The people liked him and the soldiers loved him, and he thought this of far greater importance.

Suetonius, the writer of several learned works, though he has little favour for Domitian, yet leaves the following testimony to his merit:—

"In ministering justice he was precise and industrious. Many a time, even in the common place sitting on the tribunal, he reversed the sentences of the centumvirs, given for favour and obtained by flattery. He warned the commissioners and judges not to accommodate themselves and give ear to persuasive and rhetorical assertions. Judges that were bribed and corrupted with money he noted and disgraced, together with their assessors on the bench. He ordered the tribunes of the commons to accuse judicially a base and corrupt ædile for extortion, and to force him to restitution, and to order the Senate to have a jury impanelled upon him. Moreover so strict was he with the magistrates in Rome and with the rulers of the provinces that never at any time were they more temperate or just."

Like the rest of the Roman emperors Domitian had his faults. But he was a great monarch, the greatest of the Flavian line.

CHAPTER XIV.

NERVA.

96. DOMITIAN had treated the senatorial party with scant courtesy, and they determined that his successor should be more amenable. Accordingly they elected one from their number, M. Cocceius Nerva, a man sixty-five years of age, somewhat colourless perhaps, nevertheless one who had held important offices and was generally esteemed.

The senators had no idea of restoring the republic or of adding anything to the liberties of the people. Their conception of a government for the Roman Empire would have been a senatorial oligarchy with the emperor as their own elected president, and the chief offices of State divided among themselves. If they could not obtain this, they at least wanted an emperor who would respect their ancient privileges and give them a substantial share in the government.

There was a distinct difference between the conception of government which the senators had in their minds, and that which had now come to be the imperial conception. The senators cared little how Italy and the provinces might fare, so long as Rome was supreme, and so long as their little oligarchy was supreme in Rome. The best of the emperors had emancipated themselves from this narrow-mindedness. Julius Cæsar was the first to see with clearness of vision that Rome was no longer a city but an empire. Augustus followed, fully realising his responsibilities to the provinces which Rome had herself undertaken to rule. Tiberius, Claudius, Vespasian, Domitian worked on the same lines.

Nerva's short reign was retrogressive in this respect. He attended to Rome first, to Italy a little, to the provinces least

of all. But his reign was so short that we have no wish to judge him harshly in this matter.

Italy certainly needed attention. The country was poor. It had fallen in great measure into the hands of great landowners. Grain was little grown, wine was the chief production, and much of the land was not cultivated at all. Nerva tried to help by methods which seem painfully modern. He tried to tempt the people back to the land by planting agricultural colonies here and there. But little came of the project. He also started a scheme for helping poor parents in the country to educate their children, and the scheme was encouraged by succeeding emperors, so that it lasted for a time. Nerva deserves credit for these efforts. But they were run by the senatorial party, and had the usual pauperising tendencies. It is not by means like these that a healthy nation is built up.

Nerva was a kindly man, and he did his best to please. He suspended trials for treason, recalled exiles, and took oath that he would never condemn a senator to death. This, of course, was a purely selfish measure. If men were to be condemned to death by the emperor at all, there was no reason why senators should be exempt.

Nerva's views on certain subjects coincided with those of Domitian, and several of his acts were retained. Nerva, moreover, refused to proscribe the adherents of the fallen emperor.

The Prætorian guards had not opposed the election of Nerva, but they demanded the execution of the murderers of Domitian, and Nerva found it necessary to comply with their demand.

Nerva had, like every other Roman emperor, much trouble with finance. It is to his credit that he ventured to retrench upon the expenditure in games and spectacles, and even in reducing the doles of corn to the people. He could do this the more confidently as he also sold masses of imperial property, including superfluous furniture and jewellery. He showed some courage in abolishing a tax upon the Jews which Ves-

pasian had instituted, and which was the occasion of much discontent.

All that we know of Nerva is satisfactory. But he was fortunate in the brevity of his reign. He was a little too fair-minded and kindly to please his senatorial friends. They would have been better satisfied had he been less tolerant of the friends of the former monarch. Accordingly, short though Nerva's reign was, there was time for conspiracy. Calpurnius Crassus, a noble of haughty disposition, thought himself better suited for the imperial purple than Nerva and conspired. But he received little support and was easily overthrown. Nerva did not take his life as he well might, but only banished him to Tarentum.

As Nerva was advanced in years he perceived the desirability of adopting an imperial consort and successor. As no member of his own family was suitable, his choice fell upon M. Ulpius Trajanus, the legatus of Upper Germany. To him accordingly Nerva wrote, but without waiting for his consent he adopted him. The Senate approved, and conferred upon Trajan the usual powers with the usual formalities.

98. Nerva died very shortly after the adoption of Trajan, having reigned for the short period of sixteen months. He was too old when he became emperor to hope to be a popular monarch, but his rule was decidedly beneficent, and he deserves to be remembered with esteem.

CHAPTER XV.

TRAJAN.

MARCUS ULPIUS TRAJANUS who now ascended the throne was 98.
by birth a Spaniard, a native of Italica, a town near Seville, in the south of Spain. His father had been in the Roman army, and fought against the Parthians and Jews. He commanded the tenth legion at the storming of Joppa. He had been consul at Rome and proconsul in Asia.

The news of Nerva's death and of his own accession reached Trajan in Upper Germany where he was engaged strengthening and completing the fortifications across the Rhine which had been begun by Vespasian and extended by Domitian. Trajan did not hurry back to Rome. He spent the summer in the German and the winter in the Danubian provinces. At the beginning of the following year he reached Rome, and was 99.
hailed with enthusiasm.

The fact that the Romans accepted Trajan as emperor without question is noteworthy, for he was the first foreigner who sat upon the imperial throne. Doubtless his family was of Roman origin, but he was born in Spain. Vespasian was the first Italian, Trajan the first provincial emperor. Rome had travelled far since the days of Augustus, when a provincial might not even enlist in the guards.

Trajan was forty-six years of age when he became emperor: he had occupied civil posts with credit, and he was a successful soldier. In Rome he moved amongst the people in a simple fashion and made himself popular. But he could be very cruel at times. Towards the guards who had demanded the execution of Domitian's murderers he acted with undue severity, towards the delators of Domitian's reign whom Nerva had

declined to punish, and who were perhaps after all little more than detectives or secret service men, he acted with ferocity.

Trajan was an excellent fighting man and his military exploits form his only claim to greatness. His prowess was chiefly displayed in Germany, Dacia and the East. His work in Germany was drawing to a conclusion when he ascended the throne. It was useful work. Germany was attracting the special notice of the Roman people at this time, because of the writings of Tacitus, whose *Germania* had just appeared.

The Dacian campaigns of Trajan extended over five years. Historians take infinite pains to find reasons for the annexation of Dacia, a province which lay across the Danube, apparently quite beyond the sphere of Roman influence. The mistakes of Domitian, the disloyalty of Decebalus, the raids of the Dacians, are pleaded. But perhaps we need not seek so far for a reason. Dacia was reputed rich in mineral wealth, gold, silver and iron, and the Romans coveted its treasures, as they had formerly coveted the mineral treasures of Britain. This was probably the most substantial reason for the annexation.

101. Trajan invaded Dacia with a mighty army and bore down all opposition. When he reached the capital, a town now
102. known as Gradischtje or Varhely, King Decebalus capitulated, and Trajan returned to Rome. But this invasion had been a mere reconnaissance. In two years Trajan was back on the
104. Danube with a yet greater army. The Dacians now perceived that the Romans meant to seize their country and fought fiercely for their independence. When their every effort was in vain Decebalus slew himself and many nobles perished with him.

Trajan now declared Dacia a Roman province and returned to Rome carrying with him a vast amount of booty. With the Dacian treasure he rewarded his troops, gave great gifts to the populace, and built a Forum in which stands Trajan's column, still one of the sights of Rome. The incidents of the war are carved round the column in a spiral band, and form almost the only record of the campaigns. Trajan wrote an account of his conquest, but it has not survived.

Having thus acquired and in many places devastated Dacia, Trajan proceeded to settle colonists there. Skilful miners especially were sent, and the produce of the gold mines enriched the Roman treasury for many years. A permanent stone bridge was built across the Danube at Turnu Severin.

Whilst Trajan was thus employed Cornelius Palma, the governor of Syria, added to the empire a strip of land on the east side of his province. This rectification of frontier was justifiable, because in this way the caravan routes between Egypt and the Euphrates were better protected. The new boundary extended to the Red Sea, embracing the Sinaitic peninsula and the old land of Midian. It included Petra, a city which had been important in the days of Augustus and became more important now. Its ruins are still magnificent. From this city the district was called Arabia Petræa.

After the conquest of Dacia Trajan undertook no other great military enterprise for seven years, but attended to the affairs of civil government.

The emperor was conciliatory with the Senate, but restored to it no real power. Indeed he rather extended the imperial influence over local administrations and provinces hitherto subject to the Senate.

Trajan was careful in administering justice and established a court to deal specially with fiscal suits.

Finance was more easily managed during the reign of Trajan because of the large increase of revenue which was derived from the Dacian mines. But Trajan had established a precedent by giving after the Dacian Wars huge gifts of money to the people of Rome, for which his successors gave him no thanks.

The harbours of Ostia, Civita Vecchia and Ancona were improved during Trajan's reign, roads were constructed, public baths were built and the water supply was extended.

Following Nerva's example, Trajan granted State endowments to various Italian towns to help in the education of the children of poor parents. He also granted State loans

to small landowners at low interest, in order to improve agriculture.

Some of Trajan's legislation was of doubtful value. Of such was the legislation which compelled provincials who became senators to invest in Italian land; legislation to check emigration from Italy to the colonies, and legislation which made the condition of slaves and freedmen less tolerable. Trajan's dread of corporate action amongst the people amounted to a mania. When Pliny was governor of Bithynia and a conflagration took place in one of the towns, he asked Trajan's permission to organise a fire brigade. Trajan refused permission because corporations, whatever name they bore, were sure to eventually become political societies. Let Pliny supply apparatus, warn property owners to be careful, and, in case of need, employ the populace.

During Pliny's governorship matters of much interest happened in connection with the Christians. At first they were treated as a Jewish sect, and shared in the toleration which Jews generally enjoyed. But the difference between Jew and Christian became manifest when it was found that the Christians made proselytes freely.

Evidently in Bithynia those professing Christianity had become so numerous that ordinary temple worship was neglected, and the trade of the priests and of those who sold beasts for sacrifice was interfered with. Pliny accordingly wrote to Trajan for advice. He said:—

"I have never been present at trials of Christians, and consequently do not know for what reasons, or how far, punishment is usually inflicted or inquiry made in their case. Nor have my hesitations been slight: as to whether any distinction of age should be made, or persons however tender in years should be viewed as differing in no respect from the full-grown: whether pardon should be accorded to repentance, or he who has once been a Christian should gain nothing by having ceased to be one; whether the very profession itself if unattended by crime, or else the crimes necessarily

attaching to the profession, should be made the subject of punishment.

"Meanwhile, in the case of those who have been brought before me in the character of Christians, my course has been as follows: I put it to themselves whether they were or were not Christians. To such as professed that they were, I put the inquiry a second and a third time, threatening them with the supreme penalty. Those who persisted, I ordered to execution. For, indeed, I could not doubt, whatever might be the nature of that which they professed, that their pertinacity, at any rate, and inflexible obstinacy, ought to be punished. There were others afflicted with like madness, with regard to whom, as they were Roman citizens, I made a memorandum that they were to be sent for judgment to Rome. Soon, the very handling of this matter causing, as often happens, the area of the charge to spread, many fresh examples occurred. An anonymous paper was put forth containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they either were or had been Christians, upon their calling upon the gods after me, and upon their offering wine and incense before your statue, which for this purpose I had ordered to be introduced in company with the images of the gods, moreover, upon their reviling Christ—none of which things it is said can such as are really and truly Christians be compelled to do—these I deemed it proper to dismiss. Others named by the informer admitted that they were Christians, and then shortly afterwards denied it, adding that they had been Christians, but had ceased to be so, some three years, some many years, more than one of them as much as twenty years, before. All these, too, not only honoured your image and the effigies of the gods, but also reviled Christ. They affirmed, however, that this had been the sum, whether of their crime or their delusion; they had been in the habit of meeting together on a stated day, before sunrise, and of offering in turns a form of invocation to Christ, as to a god; also of binding themselves by an oath, not for any guilty purpose, but not to commit thefts, or robberies, or

adulteries, not to break their word, not to repudiate deposits when called upon; these ceremonies having been gone through, they had been in the habit of separating, and again meeting together for the purpose of taking food—food, that is, of an ordinary and innocent kind. They had, however, ceased from doing even this, after my edict, in which, following your orders, I had forbidden the existence of fraternities. This made me think it all the more necessary to inquire, even by torture of two maid servants, who were styled deaconesses, what the truth was. I could discover nothing else than a vicious and extravagant superstition; consequently, having adjourned the inquiry, I have had recourse to your counsels. Indeed, the matter seemed to me a proper one for consultation, chiefly on account of the number of persons imperilled. For many of all ages and all ranks, aye, and of both sexes, are being called, and will be called into danger. Nor are cities only permeated by the contagion of this superstition, but villages and country parts as well; yet it seems possible to stop it and cure it. It is in truth sufficiently evident that the temples, which were almost entirely deserted, have begun to be frequented, that the customary religious rites which had long been interrupted are being resumed, and that there is a sale for the food of sacrificial beasts, for which hitherto very few buyers indeed could be found. From all this it is easy to form an opinion as to the great number of persons who may be reclaimed, if only room be granted for penitence."

To this letter Trajan sent the following reply:—

"You have followed the right mode of procedure, my dear Secundus, in investigating the cases of those who had been brought before you as Christians. For, indeed, it is not possible to establish any universal rule, possessing as it were a fixed form. These people should not be searched for; if they are informed against and convicted they should be punished; yet, so that he who shall deny being a Christian, and shall make this plain in action, that is by worshipping our gods, even though suspected on account of his past conduct, shall

obtain pardon by his penitence. Anonymous informations, however, ought not to be allowed a standing in any kind of charge; a course which would not only form the worst of precedents, but which is not in accordance with the spirit of our time." (Pliny's *Letters*, x., 97, 98, translation by J. D. Lewes.)

One is struck by the air of smug satisfaction with which men like Pliny and Trajan clad in a little brief authority sat in judgment upon and rebuked persons who were infinitely better than themselves. Pliny could order to the torture gentle deaconesses who were leading holy lives, and trying to help their fellow-creatures; he could only see obstinacy and madness in the conduct of persons who had pledged themselves not to commit theft, robbery, adultery or breach of trust; yet the poor miserable creature could see nothing but that which was estimable and wise in worshipping emperors, both dead and alive, in practising degrading and often abominable rites at the temples, and in guiding the conduct of his life by the steaming entrails of a newly killed beast.

The quotation from the writings of Pliny is of special interest because it shows, from the standpoint of a magistrate, and a man who had no sympathy whatever with Christianity, just how that faith stood at the beginning of the second century. It is evident that Christians were numerous in Asia Minor, that they practised a morality more pure and strict than that of ordinary citizens, that they submitted to torture, that they were even ready to die for their faith. So widespread was the profession of Christianity in Bithynia at this time that the temples were in some places almost entirely deserted. Complaints of this state of affairs reached the new governor from the priests and attendants at the temple and from the dealers in beasts and birds used for sacrifice. Such was the position of the Christian Church in Bithynia seventy years after the crucifixion, at a time when there were still alive various persons who had known the Apostles.

Sixteen years after his accession Trajan made war upon 113.
Parthia. There had been peace between Rome and Parthia

for a good while, ever since the time when Tiridates came to Rome and received the crown of Armenia from the hands of Nero. Nor was there any reason now for war. There was merely a pretext. The Armenian throne had become vacant, and Trajan placed Axidares, a son of the former king, upon the throne. Chosroes, the king of Parthia, thinking him unsuitable, placed his brother Parthomasiris there instead. This seemed a violation of the treaty made with Nero, but it could easily have been adjusted. Neither Parthia nor Armenia desired war; they were willing to make almost any concession to avoid it. Parthomasiris was quite willing to go to Rome and swear allegiance to Trajan if he required it.

The Romans had nothing to gain by the subjugation of Armenia. It was an inhospitable country. There was no mineral wealth worth fighting for. And in its independent state it was a valuable bulwark against Parthia. The possession of Armenia could only increase the difficulties of frontier defence. But for all this Trajan cared not a whit. He loved war; he was tired of peace; he wanted to emulate Alexander the Great; he meant to carry the Roman eagles across the Euphrates.

On his way east, at Athens, Trajan was met by a Parthian embassy pleading for peace. At Antioch another embassy appeared. But their efforts were fruitless. Trajan had determined to turn Armenia into a Roman province, however short-sighted the policy might be.

At Erzeroum Parthomasiris himself came seeking for peace. Trajan treated him contemptuously, and told him that Armenia belonged to Rome and would henceforth be ruled by a Roman governor. Trajan then sent him away with an escort of Roman cavalry. Soon after they had left the camp the king was murdered by the escort. It was a foul deed and brands Trajan as a worthless man. No escort would have dared to perpetrate such a crime without his explicit instructions. After the death of their king the Armenians made no further resistance.

From Armenia Trajan marched through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf. The Parthian king fled at his approach, and he found the country an easy prey. Accordingly he organised Mesopotamia as a Roman province, and returned to winter at Antioch. Whilst he was there the city was partially destroyed by an earthquake, and he narrowly escaped with his life.

Next year Trajan resumed operations in the Euphrates 116.
valley, and captured Ctesiphon, the Parthian capital. He then descended the Tigris to its mouth, and would have gone farther but that news reached him of rebellion in his rear. Babylonia and Mesopotamia, the provinces which had seemed to submit so easily, were now in revolt. The revolts were suppressed, though not without difficulty. Trajan then declared Parthia a conquered country, and placed his nominee upon its throne. After these events he returned to Antioch.

Trajan was now apprised of serious disturbances in various 117.
parts of the empire, in Africa, the Danubian provinces, and Britain. There had also been terrible disturbances in connection with the Jews, in Cyprus, Cyrene, and Egypt. In Cyprus and Cyrene the Jews being in a majority had triumphed over their enemies; in Egypt, where they were less numerous, they had been almost exterminated.

Clearly the emperor's presence was sorely needed at headquarters, and the Senate urged his immediate return. Trajan set out, but he never reached his capital. He had been ailing for some time, and at Selinus in Cilicia his illness proved fatal. He was sixty-five years of age when he died, and had reigned over nineteen years.

It is the fashion to speak of Trajan's reign as brilliant, but there is little reason. He was a good administrator and governed honestly. Had he clung to the humdrum duties of civil government he might have done well. But he preferred war, and must needs carry fire and sword amongst peoples who were doing him no harm. The empire was already too large. It needed governing not expanding. Augustus had

begged his successors to rest content with what they had, and he was wise. But Trajan thought he knew better, and added to its already unwieldy bulk. Little, however, came of his efforts. The province of Dacia was financially profitable, and his successors clung to it for a time. But his other conquests were quickly abandoned. His eastern exploits resulted in only one permanent addition to Roman territory, the province of Arabia Petræa.

ROMAN EMPIRE
AT ITS WIDEST EXTENT
IN THE TIME OF TRAJAN & HADRIAN
ABOUT 117 A D
SARMATIA
GERMANIA
DACIA
MŒSIA
THRACE
MACEDONIA
EPIRUS
ACHAIA
CRETE
ITALY
ILLYRICUM
PANNONIA
NORICUM
RHAETIA
MARCOMANNI
QUADI
JAZYGES
GAUL
LUGDUNENSIS
AQUITANIA
NARBONENSIS
BELGICA
BRITAIN
HIBERNIA
SPAIN
BALEARIC I.
SARDINIA
CORSICA
SICILY
MALTA
MAURETANIA
NUMIDIA
AFRICA
ATLAS M.
CYRENAICA
EGYPT
ALEXANDRIA
HELIOPOLIS
ARABIA
PARTHIA
MESOPOTAMIA
ASSYRIA
ARMENIA
CAUCASUS M.
COLCHIS
IBERIA
ALBANIA
CASPIAN SEA
BLACK SEA
PONTUS
BITHYNIA
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
CILICIA
CYPRUS
SYRIA
DAMASCUS
JERUSALEM
ANTIOCH
EDESSA
CTESIPHON
BABYLON
ROME
RAVENNA
PALERMO
CARTHAGE
LONDON
LISBON
CADIZ
CARTAGENA
TOLOSA
LUGDUNUM
NICAEA
BYZANTIUM
SMYRNA
EPHESUS
TRAPEZUS
SINOPE
CHERSON
ALBA
SIRMIUM
AQUILEIA
NAPLES
BARI
TARENTUM
SYRACUSE
MESSANA
CYRENE
PALMYRA
ARBELA
NISIBIS
TYRE
ACRE
JOPPA
ASCALON
GAZA
PELUSIUM
PETRA
ICONIUM
ISSUS
ANTIOCH
LAODICEA
ATALIA
CAESAREA
TARSUS
NIKOMEDIA
OLBIA
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CHAPTER XVI.

HADRIAN.

TRAJAN left no children, and was well advanced in years when 117.
he died, yet he had neither adopted a colleague in the empire, nor plainly indicated a successor. He had with him, however, in the East a young relative, Publius Ælius Hadrianus, to whom he had shown favour, and whom he would probably have adopted had not death prevented.

When Trajan's serious illness and the disquieting news which reached him about revolts in various parts of the empire compelled him to turn westward, he left Hadrian in command of the forces in the East.

Plotina, the wife of Trajan, was with him when he was on his death-bed, and professed that he had signed, or at least assented to, a letter of adoption. This she sent to Hadrian, and he received it two days before he received the news of Trajan's death. Whether the letter was genuine or not, all felt that Hadrian was the only possible successor. Accordingly, as soon as it was known that Trajan was dead the soldiers proclaimed Hadrian emperor. Hadrian then wrote a diplomatically worded letter to the Senate asking for their approval, and regretting the precipitate action of the soldiers in acknowledging him as emperor before his election by the Senate. The letter produced an excellent impression, and Hadrian became emperor by common consent.

The new emperor was born at Rome 76 A.D., and was therefore forty-one years of age. He had been a soldier from boyhood, and had also filled important offices of state.

Like many of the world's best soldiers Hadrian was not fond of war. He took therefore Augustus as his example

rather than Trajan, and preferred the victories of diplomacy to the victories of arms.

His first acts showed that he considered Trajan's aggressive policy a mistake. He made peace with Parthia and Armenia, relinquished all conquests beyond the Euphrates, and allowed Armenia to resume her former position of qualified independence. Arabia Petræa was retained, and Dacia; the former because it was a valuable protection to commerce, the latter because there were so many Roman colonists in the province that it could not well be abandoned.

Hadrian did not at once return to the capital. Eastern affairs took some time to settle, and it seems likely that he visited Palestine and Egypt to expedite the suppression of the
118. Jewish revolts there. Travelling thence by way of Illyricum, he reached Rome early in the following year. After his arrival Rome saw the strange spectacle of a triumph for a dead emperor, the body of Trajan being carried in a triumphal car.

Before Hadrian had been long in Rome, he had again to leave in consequence of the invasion of the Danubian provinces by the Sarmatians, tribes occupying districts in Southern Russia.

During his absence a conspiracy was planned to dethrone him. Some eminent men were implicated, and Hadrian left Marcius Turbo to deal with the Sarmatians and hurried back to Rome. When he arrived he found that the Senate had already crushed the conspiracy and executed the conspirators.

Hadrian reigned for twenty-one years and spent only seven years in Rome. During the rest of the time he was travelling about the provinces. No considerable part of the empire was left unvisited and many parts were visited twice. There are extant medals struck in commemoration of visits to twenty-five different countries.

The emperor doubtless enjoyed sight-seeing. "He looked into the crater of Etna, saw the sun rise from Mount Casius, ascended to the cataracts of the Nile, heard the statue of Memnon." But Hadrian's travels had a higher purpose than

that of mere sight-seeing. He devoted himself to the consolidation of his vast dominions. His sharp eye and trained judgment detected misgovernment where it existed, and the provinces were never better looked after than during his reign. He may not have been a genius like Julius Cæsar and Augustus, but he realised that the prosperity of his subjects, and not foreign conquest, was his first business. War he avoided wherever possible. Imperial expansion and military glory were with Hadrian only means to an end.

Acting upon these principles Hadrian refrained from any further extension of the empire, and confined his attention to the strengthening of the existing frontiers. When the Sarmatians had been driven back by Turbo, Hadrian constructed important lines of fortification in order to make invasion in that corner of the empire harder in future. It is said that he partially destroyed the bridge which Trajan had built across the Danube at Turnu Severin. This may, however, only mean that he cut off one end of it and transformed it into a draw-bridge.

In scheming his fortifications on the frontier Hadrian added to the natural defence of water the artificial defences of embankments, ditches, and stone walls. He also encouraged the development of frontier towns. The villages chosen for camps often became commercial centres. As the presence of the garrison both encouraged and protected trade, merchants settled in the villages, and veteran soldiers when their time was up, also settled there with their families. Thus the camp became a town, and perhaps the town a city. Several of the Roman stations still exist, and have become important cities.

Hadrian was an indefatigable army reformer. The phalanx made so famous by the Greeks and Macedonians was substituted in an improved form for the old Roman battle array. Various changes were made both in tactics and in armour. Heavy cavalry was introduced and improvements were made in the military engines which accompanied the armies. Discipline was strictly maintained, but the soldiers were treated kindly and there were no mutinies.

121. Hadrian's travels into the provinces in his capacity as emperor began with a visit to Gaul. From Gaul he went to
122. Germany and thence to Britain. There had been satisfactory progress in the island province, though it was now causing some anxiety. About fifty towns had been established in Southern Britain, and the inhabitants of the province were prosperous and contented. But this very prosperity made them less warlike, and more envied by their neighbours, and the northern tribes raided the province from time to time. To check their raids, Hadrian began a wall from Bowness on the Solway by way of Burgh on Sands, Carlisle, Gilsland, Housesteads, Chesters, and Newcastle to Wallsend near the mouth of the Tyne.

The wall was about seventy miles long and had fortified stations at about every fourth mile. The fortification was in three parts, a stone wall facing north, an earth wall facing south and a road between. The stone wall was about 7 feet broad by 20 high. The earth wall consisted of a mound, a ditch, and a double mound. Remnants of the fortification are yet to be seen, particularly at Housesteads (Borcovicium), where there is a continuous stretch of walling. The fortification was the work of several emperors, indeed it is likely that the stone wall was built eighty years after by Septimius Severus. But the work was designed by Hadrian, and it has always been associated with his name.

The British wall was not only serviceable as a frontier barrier, but also as an elongated camp in an enemy's country. There were unsubdued tribes south as well as north of the wall, and it prevented co-operation between them.

Hadrian was a man of culture, and, partly for this reason no doubt, showed much favour to Greece. He adorned many cities with new buildings, and tried to make Athens once more a power in Greece. He helped the city financially and it flourished for a time. Hadrian visited Greece twice, making a prolonged stay on each occasion.

Hadrian also visited Africa and travelled very carefully

through the Asiatic provinces of the empire. The inhabitants of Antioch insulted him in some way and he was much displeased. The city was specially immoral and luxurious.

During Hadrian's reign a terrible rebellion broke out in Judæa. The Jews, notwithstanding the miseries to which they had been subjected in the reign of Vespasian, were still numerous. In the end of Trajan's reign Hadrian had been employed by him to suppress Jewish rebellion and had done it with wholesale slaughter. When he ascended the throne he determined to root out what he thought the Jewish superstition altogether. Accordingly he prohibited circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and the reading of the law. He also threatened to convert Jerusalem, which with marvellous vitality was again lifting its head above the ground, into a Roman colony.

The Jews bore patiently with Hadrian's tyranny for a 131.
time, but at last rose upon their oppressors. Believing that a man named Bar-Cocaba (Son of the Star) was their promised deliverer, they rallied to his standard, captured the site of Jerusalem, and for a time carried their arms victoriously throughout Judæa. Hadrian himself visited the scene of action, but put the conduct of the war into the hands of Julius Severus. The war lingered on for three years, but was at length crushed with more than usual barbarity. Bar-Cocaba was slain in battle, the Rabbi Akiba, an old man who had championed his cause, was flayed alive, Jerusalem was again levelled with the ground, and Palestine was turned into a wilderness.

The emperor now carried his threat concerning Jerusalem into effect, he settled a colony in the city under the name of Ælia Capitolina, and erected a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus on the site of the Holy Place. Jews were forbidden to enter the city on pain of death, and to make them less inclined a swine in marble was set over the gate leading to Bethlehem. In this war about 1,000 towns and villages and 600,000 men were destroyed. This brutal treatment of the Jewish race is an ugly blot upon Hadrian's memory.

Our last chapter contained a correspondence between Pliny and Trajan concerning the persecution of the Christians. This persecution went on under Hadrian and even increased. We cannot, however, make Hadrian personally responsible for the persecution. Governors of provinces sometimes persecuted for the sake of pleasing the heathen priests, and looked on with indifference when mob violence was perpetrated in order that they might not incur unpopularity with the people. It must be said to Hadrian's credit that when he was passing through Greece he permitted two learned Christians of Athens, Quadratus and Aristides, to present to him defences of the Christian Faith. As a result he issued an imperial order forbidding mobs to assemble against the Christians.

Fragments remain of the *Apology of Quadratus*. In one the following words occur: "Our Saviour's works were real. The sick whom he healed, the dead whom he raised, were constantly to be seen, not only during his sojourn on earth, but long after his departure, so that some of them have survived even down to our own times."

The *Apology of Aristides* was believed to be lost, but a part of it has been lately recovered.

Hadrian organised the civil service in a way never before attempted. The old and pernicious system of tax-farming, which had gradually been dying out, was now almost entirely abolished. A financial bureau was established, with a minister of finance at the head of it. The taxes were levied with some regard for equity, and Hadrian ordered that the valuation of property, which formed the basis of taxation, should be revised every fifteen years.

A consultant body, the *consiliarii Augusti* was formed. This privy council consisted of skilled men, mostly jurists, who received salaries, and were ready to advise the emperor on all occasions when he required their services. This gave the emperor's advisers an official position, and he need no longer be accused of having favourites.

Hadrian's reign forms somewhat of an epoch in juris-

prudence. For two centuries Rome had been famous for its jurists. Augustus encouraged the profession, and gave certain of the leading men a semi-official position. Interpretations of the law given by the king's counsel, if we may so term them, were to a certain extent looked upon as if given under Imperial sanction. Hadrian went farther than Augustus. He gave to the decisions of the select jurists the force of law if they were all in agreement. If the jurists consulted by the judge disagreed, he might make his choice. To appreciate the point of this we must remember that the Roman judex was not like the modern judge necessarily a skilled jurist. This imperial patronage gave a status to the profession, and induced able men to enter it. It also led to the growth of a mass of legal decisions, real and hypothetical, which were afterwards collected by Justinian, and have been of the greatest importance in moulding European law.

The prætors in Rome had a habit of issuing on their election edicts stating the rules by which they meant to regulate their decisions during their term of office. These edicts were generally merely a repetition of former edicts, with such additions or amendments as might to them seem desirable. The edict had become cumbrous, and the system introduced uncertainty into commercial transactions. Hadrian accordingly employed an eminent jurist named Salvius Julianus to edit a general edict, which should be a rule and guide to all succeeding prætors. It was called the *edictum perpetuum*, and a *senatus consultum* gave it the force of law. After this, 131.
magistrates might only use their own discretion when there was nothing in the edict to meet the particular case.

The legislation of Trajan with regard to the unprotected classes had been retrogressive, and Hadrian reversed some of it. He punished masters and mistresses for cruelty to slaves, forbade the sale of slaves for immoral purposes, and revived an old law which prohibited a master from killing a slave, and compelled him to hand him over for trial before the court.

Hadrian was an enterprising builder. He restored temples

in Rome, constructed a new bridge across the Tiber, and began the imposing mausoleum, called Hadrian's tomb, now known as the Castle of St. Angelo. It was completed by his successor, and was for some time the burying-place of the emperors. At Tibur the emperor erected the magnificent villa which is still a place of popular resort.

In his later years Hadrian's health failed. It was a disappointment to him to know that, notwithstanding a life-time of earnest work, he was popular neither with the people nor with the aristocracy. Notwithstanding this he was a useful monarch, and the empire was well governed during his reign. But for certain actions, and especially for his brutality towards the Jews, he would deserve a very high place among Roman emperors.

136. Hadrian had adopted a man named Ælius Verus as his successor. Verus was unworthy of the position, and the adoption was an unpopular act. Fortunately, he died before Hadrian. The emperor then adopted Titus Antoninus, a man of consular rank, fifty-two years of age; and of an excellent
138. disposition. A few months after the adoption of Antoninus, Hadrian died. His important reign had lasted nearly twenty-one years.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANTONINUS PIUS.

TITUS AURELIUS FULVUS BOIONIUS ANTONINUS (Antoninus Pius) now ascended the throne. He had not been eager for the dignity, for when Hadrian, who was only ten years his senior, offered to adopt him, he took a month to consider whether he should accept the honour or not. Fortunately for Rome he did accept it, for he was one of the best of her emperors. 138.

As Antoninus was himself also childless, Hadrian required that he should nominate two heirs, Marcus, the nephew of Antoninus himself, better known as Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, son of that Ælius Verus who had so lately died.

At the accession of Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius was seventeen years of age, whilst Verus was a child of eight. Some years after Marcus Aurelius married Faustina, the niece of Ælius Verus, and was admitted by Antoninus as consort, being then about twenty-five. He also received the title of Cæsar, and was presumptive successor. He was not entrusted for some time however with much active share in the administration. Lucius Verus, on the other hand, did not receive these public acknowledgments, and it seems clear that Antoninus did not mean that the supreme power should be divided. Marcus was meant to be the successor, but should he die, Verus would be chosen. 147.

Antoninus reigned for twenty-three years, and so well that there is little to record concerning his reign. The empire had rest. There were wars on the frontier, but not wars of much consequence. Hadrian's skilful policy followed by the peaceful attitude taken up by Antoninus secured a period of quiet.

In Britain only was there any serious trouble. The north-

ern tribes rebelled but were reduced by the prefect Lollius Urbius. To check the incursions of the Caledonians a rampart was constructed from the Clyde to the Forth. Agricola had attempted this some years before. It was now done thoroughly. The rampart consisted of a ditch forty feet wide and twenty feet deep, and an earth wall. On the south side of the ditch ran a military road, and there were ten entrenched camps. Portions of the rampart still exist, known as Graham's dyke.

This formidable rampart was originally about thirty-seven miles long. It extended from Carriden on the Forth to West Kilpatrick on the Clyde. Like Hadrian's wall between the Solway and the Tyne it served a double purpose. It kept back the outer barbarians and made the inner barbarians more peaceful. As a result the district between the walls was soon filled with colonists and became prosperous.

Hadrian had travelled in the provinces so continuously that he had been unpopular in Rome. Antoninus went to the other extreme, for he only left Italy once during his reign. But the provinces were not neglected. He endeavoured to prevent oppression in tax-collecting, and encouraged long periods of office so that provincial governors might better understand their work and more fully identify themselves with the people whom they governed.

By avoiding fresh conquest, wastefulness in public displays, and extravagance at Court, Antoninus was able to reduce taxation, deal generously with the people, and leave a magnificent balance in the treasury at his death.

In the field of legislation and jurisprudence Antoninus laid the foundation for much excellent work. The able men amongst the Romans, deprived of the sphere for the exercise of mental energy which a modern finds in parliamentary duties, devoted much of their time to the study of legal subtleties with results which still benefit the civilised world. Roman law is the most abiding monument of the Roman Empire.

Augustus had greatly encouraged legal study, and Hadrian,

acting under the advice of the jurists of his time, and especially of Salvius Julianus, the most eminent, had, by the drawing up of the *edictum perpetuum* and the extension of the *jus respondendi*, further systematised legal procedure.

Antoninus proceeded further in the same direction. He appointed Salvius Julianus to be prefect of the city, and gave other eminent men much encouragement. By this wise action he substantially helped forward the golden age of Roman jurisprudence which is generally placed in the beginning of the third century.

The *Institutes of Gaius* were written in this reign, and published perhaps the very year in which Antoninus died. On this work nearly four centuries later Justinian based his *Institutes*, but, though this was known, no copy of the writings of Gaius had ever been found. At last, in 1816, Niebuhr, a German specialist, discovered in the library of Verona a palimpsest. On careful investigation he found that a parchment with the *Institutes of Gaius* had been scraped and the letters of St. Jerome written above. With the aid of chemicals and the microscope St. Jerome was removed and Gaius stood revealed. Some of it could not be deciphered, but enough was found to greatly widen our knowledge of Roman law.

Antoninus was no mere patron of lawyers, he was himself a legislator of merit. He alleviated the condition of slaves, greatly circumscribed the use of torture in examination, and laid down the principle, now universally accepted, even if somewhat indifferently acted upon, that every accused person should be deemed innocent until he has been proved guilty.

Antoninus also laid special stress upon the consideration of equitable principles as well as legal rules. To use his own words:—

"Etsi nihil facile mutandum est ex sollemnibus tamen ubi æquitas evidens poscit, subviendum est". Which we may translate: "Although customary rules are not to be lightly set aside, yet when equity clearly demands it they must be" (Dig. iv., 1, 7).

The emperor was a religious man and zealous for the national faith. But his zeal did not incline him to persecute others, and when he heard that the populace in certain cities were harrying the Christians, he issued rescripts ordering that the outrages should be repressed.

Justin Martyr's first Apology for the Christian faith was addressed to Antoninus at Rome about 148 A.D. Afterwards Justin inscribed a second Apology, a sort of appendix to the first.

Justin appeals on behalf of the men who are hated and reviled by the whole human race. He demands that they should not be condemned unheard, but that the charges against them should be investigated. If they can be substantiated let punishment be awarded; but if no one can convict the Christians of any crime, then true reason forbids that the emperor, on account of a wicked rumour, should wrong blameless men, or rather wrong himself, which he would do if he decided not by judgment but by passion. He concludes by saying: "If these things seem to you to be reasonable and true, honour them; but if nonsensical, despise them as nonsense; only do not decree death against those who have done no wrong. For we forewarn you that if you continue in the course of injustice, you cannot escape the impending judgment of God."

We cannot say whether Justin's efforts produced any effect on Antoninus, or suggested his action in favour of the Christians. But we thankfully acknowledge that the emperor was mild and tolerant towards them, and protected them from the violence of the mob. Such, indeed, was his reputation among the Christians for toleration that some even looked upon him as favourable to their creed.

Marcus Aurelius, in his *Meditations*, gives a picture of Antoninus which we may produce, translating freely:—

"He was meek, constant, free from vanity, assiduous, accessible to all, impartial, and moderate. He examined accurately into affairs, and heard the opinions of others with

patience. He avoided favouritism, yet was careful never to neglect his friends. He had a contented mind and a cheerful countenance. He disliked flattery, and adhered strictly to economy, even though some accused him of meanness. He was of mature mind and sound judgment, able to govern both himself and others."

From all that we know of Antoninus Pius we believe this judgment to be just. He lived a singularly blameless life, and ruled the Roman world with discretion. Rome had greater emperors than Antoninus Pius, but no emperor more worthy of our esteem.

Antoninus died in his villa at Lorium in the seventy-fourth year of his age, having reigned for twenty-three years. 161.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

161. MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS was born at Rome 121 A.D., and was, therefore, forty years of age when he ascended the throne. No Roman emperor has been handed down to posterity with greater encomiums. This makes it less easy to deal with his memory in the present instance. Perceiving with what bias ancient historians write we have endeavoured to judge every man by his works, and we think the principle just. But if we apply it in the present instance we shall find ourselves greatly out of harmony with the prevailing sentiment.

The reign of Marcus Aurelius was an unhappy one for Rome. In it for the first time the symptoms of imperial decline are unmistakably seen. We cannot blame Marcus Aurelius for this, for the disease that killed Rome was one of long standing. If it came to the surface in his reign he cannot be held responsible. Yet he did nothing to check the disease and some things to make it more desperate.

Apart, however, from this aspect of the case, we can see little to praise in this emperor. He was a bad financier, a feeble general, and, there is much reason to believe, a cruel man. Why, then, has posterity so lauded him? Partly at least because he was a philosopher and left behind him an interesting book of meditations which present him in a somewhat favourable light.

With the emperor as a philosopher we are not concerned. He may have been an excellent one. But history has shown that good philosophers may be bad kings, and that philosophers can be as cruel as other men. Whatever, therefore, the merits of Marcus Aurelius may be in this respect they should not in-

fluence our judgment concerning his reign. A king must be judged by his deeds. Thus judged we find little in the reign of Marcus Aurelius deserving of esteem, far less of fulsome praise.

Antoninus Pius had by the command of Hadrian adopted two heirs, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. He made the former his colleague and showed by this and by his death-bed instructions that it was his desire that he should be his successor. Accordingly the succession took place with general concurrence.

Marcus began his career with an action which was good-natured but dangerous. He requested the senate to confer upon his adoptive brother, Lucius Verus, equal rights and privileges with himself. This was an innovation. It had been common enough for an emperor to have a consort with subordinate powers and a lien upon the succession. Marcus Aurelius had been such an one himself. But the joint rule of two equal emperors was a different matter. Fortunately in the present instance it made little difference, for Lucius was easy going and let Marcus govern. Moreover he did not live very long.

The attitude of the emperor towards the Senate was satisfactory. He refused to bind himself as his predecessors had done never to condemn a senator to death. He also used his power of election to the Senate freely. But he showed the senators deference and laid important matters before them. Thus even if he did not take their advice he gratified them by letting them know what was going on. His treatment of the senate had probably much to do with the favour shown him by historians of the period.

Marcus improved the civil service by the introduction of under-secretaries in the various departments. He curtailed the freedom of municipalities, but he gave greater freedom to public associations, thus reversing the suspicious attitude of Trajan.

As a financier the emperor was a failure. Antoninus Pius

had been extremely careful, and had thus been able not only to carry out important public works and reduce taxation, but to leave a balance of £21,000,000 in the treasury when he died. Marcus praises his carefulness in words already quoted, yet he did not follow in his footsteps for a single hour. He was lavish and imprudent from the beginning. Following the example of the worst class of emperors he began his reign by giving huge gifts to the soldiers. Each soldier of the Prætorian guard received £160, and the other soldiers in proportion. He also bestowed much largess upon the Roman people and increased the number of those who were entitled to receive doles of food. In this way he obtained a fleeting popularity, but his action was unjust to the taxpayers throughout the empire and injurious to the character of the already sufficiently pauperised inhabitants of Rome.

In these foolish ways the treasure left by Antoninus was speedily dissipated. The consequences were serious, for in the reign of Marcus Aurelius the peace which had characterised the empire during the days of Hadrian and Antoninus came to a sudden end, and the empire had not only to face war in the East but also the most formidable attack from the barbarian tribes that it had yet encountered.

Moreover, during this reign a terrible pestilence afflicted the empire. Had Marcus been the most prudent of financiers he would have found his task hard. As things were, the imperial finance collapsed. The crown jewels were pawned, the gold coinage was depreciated until it went out of circulation, and even the silver coinage was called in that it might be reissued in depreciated form.

Shortly after the accession of Marcus Aurelius war broke out with Parthia. The Parthian king, Vologeses, an able man, who had again united the Parthian realm, endeavoured to regain the ascendency in Armenia which Parthia had lost, and presumed to set Pacorus, his nominee, upon the throne. The matter could probably have been adjusted by negotiation as it had been before, but Severianus, the governor of Cappadocia,

acted with undue precipitation, crossed the Euphrates and invaded Parthia. Even had war been desirable his forces were inadequate; they were annihilated and he slew himself. The Parthians, elated by their victory, carried the war into Roman territory, invaded Syria and again defeated the Roman forces.

The matter was now serious and Verus, the joint emperor, proceeded to the East with reinforcements and undertook the 162.
conduct of the war. Being, however, destitute of military talent, he wisely remained at Antioch enjoying himself whilst his officers did the work. Of these the leaders were Priscus Verus and Avidius Cassius.

Priscus Verus recovered Armenia and placed a Roman nominee upon the throne instead of Pacorus. Avidius Cassius, who became governor of Syria, invaded Mesopotamia and carried the Roman arms as far as Media. Seleucia and Ctesiphon were destroyed.

Thus the Parthian war ended, successful from a military point of view, but carrying with it dire results of which no one could have dreamt. There was at the time of the war a virulent plague in the Euphrates Valley, and the Roman armies brought it with them to Europe. Wherever they marched the infection spread. Those were the days of Galen, so celebrated as a physician, and he left a description of the symptoms. "Pustules," he says, "appeared upon the body, accompanied by inward heat and putrid breath, with hoarseness and cough. If the imposthumes broke there was a chance of recovery, if not, the patient was certain to die." The ravages of this plague have been compared to those of the Black Death in the fourteenth century. Italy especially suffered. In Rome immense numbers died. In the rural districts towns were left almost without inhabitant. Niebuhr has said that the ancient world never recovered from the blow thus inflicted upon it, and there can be no doubt that it had far-reaching results.

Scarcely had the joint-emperors enjoyed their triumph for success in the Parthian War than war broke out on the Euro- 166.

pean frontiers of the empire. The war arose out of a vast tribal invasion in which many tribes took part. Of these the Marcomanni and the Quadi were the most prominent. The tribes broke into the Danubian provinces and overran Dacia, Pannonia, Raetia, and Noricum. Nay, more, they did that which no barbarian tribes had presumed to do for two centuries, they invaded the sacred soil of Italy itself, crossing the Julian Alps and laying siege to Aquileia.

The barbarians were doubtless encouraged to greater effrontery from the fact that a portion of the army of the Danube had been withdrawn for the Parthian War. It is probable, however, that the invasion did not proceed primarily from the deliberate action of the frontier tribes, but that they were forced across by the tribes behind them. It was, in fact, the first of a series of movements destined in the end to change the whole character of the Roman empire.

168. Both emperors went to the front. As they advanced the invaders retreated and would have been glad of peace. A Roman camp was formed at Aquileia, but the plague continued to be so virulent, and the legions were so thinned by sickness and death, that it was not easy to keep a fighting force in the field. It is interesting to know that Galen was consulted about the health of the camp, but at such a time he could do little.

169. Verus died and Marcus had to carry on the war alone. It lasted with slight intermissions until his own death eleven years later. For some time the Romans had no success, but gradually the tide turned. Marcus made terms with certain of the tribes and persuaded them to fight the others. This method of meeting the barbarian difficulty became popular with the Roman government in later years.

In the end the integrity of the frontier was maintained, but the exhausting effects of the combination of war and pestilence were long felt in the empire. Perhaps the most important result of the war was that from it dates the policy of transplanting barbarians to the Roman side of the frontier.

Marcus endeavoured to settle the question in this way. He made settlements in Pannonia, Moesia and Dacia. He even endeavoured to establish a barbarian colony near Ravenna, but it did not succeed as the colonists endeavoured to seize the city itself. Elsewhere, however, the arrangement was permanent. Whole tribes were granted lands in the frontier provinces, the colonists being bound to perform military service.

The policy of transplanting had in the end disastrous results so far as the integrity of the empire was concerned, for it was destroyed quite as much by sympathisers with invaders inside the empire as by the invaders themselves. But though the filling up of vacant places with Teutonic tribes may have ruined the empire, we cannot contend that it was not for the ultimate good of mankind. And had there been less selfishness and more foresight in high places, the policy of transplanting need not have been injurious even to the empire itself.

Whilst Marcus was engaged on the Danubian frontier, there was a serious revolt in Syria. Avidius Cassius, the general who had been so successful against the Parthians, was governor there. The reign of Marcus had not been so successful as to inspire much loyalty, and there was a general impression that he was better at philosophy than at government. A rumour reached the troops that he was dead, so they proclaimed their general Cassius emperor in his stead. But when the rumour of his death was contradicted, and it was known that he was on his way to the East, the soldiers, not very keen on the business, murdered Cassius. Marcus treated the other conspirators with lenity, and so the rebellion was at an end.

When the emperor returned to Rome he found that war had broken out agair on the Danube, and he had to go thither. This time he was accompanied by his son Commodus. We have few details of the war, but Marcus seems to have been successful on the whole. Whilst it was yet in progress the emperor died at Vindobona, whereupon Commodus at once

180. granted favourable terms to the Marcommani and the Quadi and returned to Rome.

During the reign of Marcus Aurelius the Christians were bitterly persecuted. Since the days of Nero they had enjoyed a certain amount of rest. Vespasian had not persecuted. Domitian persecuted to a certain extent. Nerva was kind. Trajan said, somewhat illogically, that Christians need not be sought out, but that if informations were laid against them they must be punished. In the beginning of Hadrian's reign there was persecution, but when his attention was called to it he forbade it, and it ceased. When Antoninus Pius heard that the Christians were being hunted down in certain parts of the empire he at once checked the persecution. We have said that he may have been influenced in his benevolent action by Justin's Apology. At Rome Justin addressed his first Apology to the emperor about 148 A.D. Afterwards, perhaps in 161, he inscribed a second Apology to Marcus Aurelius. It is highly probable that the emperor was acquainted with the contents of these Apologies. Yet, reversing the policy of Antoninus, his adoptive father, he allowed the Christians to be persecuted during his reign without let or hindrance.

The persecution was worse than anything that had gone before. Nero's persecution was probably limited to Rome, that during the reign of Marcus Aurelius was carried throughout the empire. Moreover, whereas formerly persecution had been largely the work of the ignorant mob, local governors and judges now took it up officially. Disregarding Trajan's rule that Christians should not be sought out, they instigated informations and examined witnesses by torture in order to obtain evidence against their victims.

Some contend on behalf of Marcus Aurelius that he may have been ignorant of what was going on. Even this would have been reprehensible, and would have demonstrated his unfitness for the imperial position. But the supposition is inconsistent with facts. His own writings show that he knew

about the Christians, and he issued rescripts upon the subject of the persecution.

Nor was the emperor misled by the wild charges made by the vulgar against the Christians. Those charges received no official sanction. The Christians were officially accused of refusing to worship the national gods and of nothing more. The gods that were good enough for an emperor and a philosopher should have been good enough for them. It was "obstinacy," that was all.

Accordingly, during this reign, no effort was made to check the passions of the mob or the yet more deadly hatred of the official. Nor was the emperor's position merely passive. In 177 A.D. he issued a rescript providing for the punishment of new sects, and when there was some doubt as to how in certain cases Christians should be dealt with, Marcus Aurelius in a second rescript ordered that those who denied the faith should be set free, and that those who confessed it should be beaten to death. "This did not apply to Roman citizens over whom a governor had not power of life and death" (Bury, *Roman Empire*, p. 580).

Many Christians of both sexes were tortured and put to death in this reign, the persecution extending over almost the whole area of the empire. Among those who suffered was Justin, surnamed the Martyr, of whose efforts to defend the Christians we have spoken. He was a Samaritan, born at Nablus, the ancient Shechem. The martyrdom took place 165 A.D., about four years after the presentation of the second Apology. He was beheaded at Rome.

In Asia Minor the persecution raged violently. Amongst many martyrs the aged Polycarp stands prominent. He had known the Apostle John personally, and may have been appointed by him to the see in Smyrna. He may even have been the Angel of the Church at Smyrna referred to in the Apocalypse. "Revile Christ," urged the proconsul, "and I will set thee at liberty."

"Revile Christ!" answered Polycarp. "Eighty and six

years have I served him, and he never did me wrong; how can I revile him, my King, my Saviour?"

In Gaul also the storm of persecution was severe, especially in the cities of Lyons and Vienne. There was no regard of age and sex. The leading members of the Churches were apprehended, and the most cruel tortures were used, even upon delicate women. A few drew back, the great majority endured suffering and met death with constancy.

Amongst the sufferers was Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons. He was ninety years of age, and might well have been spared. Yet he was dragged about, and beaten and kicked to death.

Attalus, a Roman citizen, was placed in an iron chair at the games and roasted to death.

Blandina, a woman, was subjected to unheard-of torture, and at last was enclosed in a net and gored by a bull. Repeatedly tossed, yet still living, she was despatched with the sword.

All these horrors were perpetrated during the reign of "the wise, the virtuous, the much-suffering Aurelius," whom an eminent historian, Dean Merivale, has ventured to compare with our great and good King Alfred.

There is a common saying that the best kings have been the worst persecutors. May it not rather be that the worst persecutors have been handed down to posterity as the best kings? Until comparatively modern times the writing of history was in the hands of the official and ecclesiastical classes, who believed in the repression of all who would not conform to the worship prescribed by the State, and who doubtless considered the attitude of Marcus Aurelius towards Christianity all that could be desired.

CHAPTER XIX.

ROMAN LITERATURE UNDER THE EARLY EMPERORS.

L. ANNÆUS SENECA, the famous philosopher, was born at 3 A.D.
Corduba, in Spain. He was brought to Rome as a child and educated there. Afterwards he became an ardent rhetorician and philosopher, professing Stoicism.

Seneca was banished to Corsica by Claudius, but was after- 41.
wards recalled through the influence of Agrippina, who was now married to the emperor. He was made tutor to Nero, her son by a former husband, and he had a great influence over Nero during the early years of his reign.

Though he owed his recall and his position to Agrippina, he 60.
did all he could to rob her of her son's affections, he was a party to her murder, and he wrote a letter to the Senate to justify it. There is too much reason to believe that he encouraged Nero in profligacy in order to undermine his mother's influence. Some writers pretend that Seneca was Nero's victim, but seeing that Seneca was more than fifty years of age when Nero became emperor, and that Nero was then a mere stripling, this is absurd.

Seneca used his position at court to enable him to amass vast wealth. He was a moneylender of the worst type, and one of the saddest rebellions in Britain, that which ended in the death of Queen Boadicea, is said to have been in great measure the result of his extortions. At length he lost his position at court and retired, but being involved in the conspiracy of Piso, he was ordered to commit suicide.

Seneca was neither a good man nor a great man, but he was a voluminous writer and a man of much mental power. Of his works which are extant the most important are twelve

books of philosophical dialogues, discoursing on anger, providence, the brevity of life and such matters. Two of the books discourse on clemency. They were written after Nero's accession, and it is from one of these that the famous anecdote is taken about Nero's wish that he could neither read nor write in order that he might not have to sign a warrant for execution.

Seneca's writings show that his knowledge extended over a wide area. But he was neither original nor profound, and probably wrote rather for political influence than for literary reputation. He said some good things, however. "God dwells in the soul of the slave as well as in that of the knight," and "The wise man receives neither injury nor insult," may be mentioned as examples. The sayings are neither very deep nor very original, but the truths are clearly expressed.

23. C. PLINIUS SECUNDUS (Pliny the Elder) was born at Como. He came of a wealthy family, was well educated, and filled important public offices. He had travelled widely and served both in the army and navy. At the time of his death he was admiral of the fleet which lay at Misenum, in the Bay of Naples.

Pliny the Elder was an indefatigable student, and had a habit of taking notes upon every subject that interested him. He left a mass of undigested notes behind him when he died.

The only work of his which has come down to us is a natural history. This title in those days covered a wider area than it would now. The work, which is dedicated to Titus and is in thirty-six books, deals with astronomy, botany, geography, mineralogy, physics and zoology. Some one has said that it touches upon 20,000 matters of importance, and draws its materials from 2,000 volumes. It is, however, merely an accumulation of matter in which the true and the false are so intermingled that it is void of scientific value. Pliny also wrote a history of the German wars, a grammatical treatise, and various other books.

He died at Vesuvius, 79 A.D., and the manner of his death is described in a letter from Pliny, his nephew, to Tacitus. We

have already referred to this in the chapter which deals with the reign of Titus.

C. SILIUS ITALICUS was a lawyer, and filled various public offices. He was consul in the year in which Nero perished, and was afterwards pro-consul of Asia. When seventy-five years of age he was smitten by an incurable disease, and suffered so much that he starved himself to death. 25.

The great work of Silius was entitled the *Punica*, a heroic poem in seventeen books. It has come down to us entire. It narrates incidents of the Second Punic War, and is neither original nor interesting. Silius was a devoted admirer of Virgil, and his work abounds in imitations of his favourite poet.

A. PERSIUS FLACCUS (Persius) was born at Volaterra, in Etruria. He was a writer of satire, not very original, for he copies Horace somewhat closely. The want of originality is hid under mannerism, and his writing is often strained and even obscure. But he died in 62 A.D., only twenty-eight years of age, so that he might have grown out of his mannerisms. He seems to have been an earnest-minded man, and there is much to commend in the six short satires which he has left. 34.

M. FABIUS QUINTILIANUS (Quintilian) was born at Calagurris, in Spain. He came to Rome in Galba's train, practised at the bar, and was successful both as an advocate and a teacher. Among his pupils was the younger Pliny. 35.

Quintilian was the first to hold the professorial chair of rhetoric at Rome, owing his appointment to Vespasian who founded it.

The most important work of this writer which we have is *Institutio Oratoriæ*, the training of an orator. This book begins with the most elementary education, and goes on to describe what should be the training of a man destined for public life. It is a good book, laying down sound rules, and pointing the students to the best models.

39. M. ANNÆUS LUCANUS.—This genius was a nephew of Seneca, and was born at Corduba in Spain. He came to Rome at an early age, and quickly became famous as a reciter in Latin and Greek. At first he was favourably noticed by Nero but was afterwards viewed with jealousy, and even forbidden to recite. Unfortunately he was mixed up with the con-
65. spiracy of Piso. Alarmed for his safety, he turned informer, and caused the death of several. At last he slew himself. He was only twenty-six years of age, and the poem of *Pharsalia*, the only extant production of his of which we are possessed, shows considerable power. Had he lived he might have developed into a great poet.

43. M. VALERIUS MARTIALIS (Martial) was an epigrammatic poet. He was born at Bilbilis in Spain, came to Rome 66 A.D. and died in Spain 104 A.D. He left an enormous number of short poems, some 1,500 in all. They deal with an infinite variety of subjects, and show an abundance of wit and a fertile imagination. They also probably describe a certain side of Roman life as it was in his day. But it was a bad side, and Martial's writings show that he must have been a bad man. Making every allowance for the fact that he was probably poor, and wrote in order to attract favour, he must be convicted of having prostituted his pen. But he was very clever.

45. P. PAPINIUS STATIUS, born at Naples, was the son of Domitian's tutor. His father was also a poet, and wrote on the burning of the Capitol. A number of his works are extant, enough to show that he had a poetical gift, though not of a very high order. His most ambitious work was the *Thebaid*, a heroic poem in twelve books. Another heroic poem dealt with the exploits of Achilles. Statius was a court poet, and flatters the emperor and his favourites unduly.

54. C. CORNELIUS TACITUS was probably born in one of the last years of Claudius, or in the first of Nero, that is about 54 A.D. His parentage and family are unknown, and such per-

sonal history as we have concerning him comes from his own works or from the letters of the younger Pliny who was his personal friend. Eleven of Pliny's letters are addressed to Tacitus. It is probable, however, that he belonged to a family of some standing, because he was admitted to the quæstorship and Senate at an early age.

It is likely that Tacitus was at some time a pupil of Quintilian, and that he was a young man of good character and promise, for when about twenty-three years of age he was 77.
betrothed to the daughter of Agricola, then consul. His early days were spent at the bar, his official career began under Vespasian, and he received favour from both Titus and Domitian. When in the prime of life he was associated with Pliny 100.
in the prosecution of Marius Priscus, pro-consul of Africa; and an inscription from Mylasa in Caria shows that he was for a time pro-consul of Asia.

There is no evidence that Tacitus left any children, but he was claimed as an ancestor by his namesake the emperor Tacitus in the third century. The people of Terni claimed the historian as their citizen, and erected a tomb to him, which was destroyed in the latter part of the sixteenth century by Pius V. as that of an enemy of Christianity. The *Dialogue on Orators* is generally accepted as the first work of Tacitus. It was probably written in the earlier part of Domitian's reign. It shows strong republican sympathies and anti-imperial bias. It is clear from the writings of Tacitus that he hated the empire, and only accepted it because there was no alternative. In the *Dialogue on Orators* Tacitus traces and explains the decline of oratory in Rome.

The *Agricola* was written by Tacitus, most probably in the reign of Trajan. It gives an account of the life of his father-in-law, especially of that part of his career which was associated with the invasion of Britain. The campaigns are described, and a superficial account of the island is given. Tacitus shows what we may describe as an amiable weakness in over-rating his father-in-law. He draws his life and charac-

ter in very bright colours, and gives him a higher place in history than fairly belongs to him.

The *Germania* describes the geography of Germany and the manners and institutions of the German tribes. It contrasts the simplicity and purity of German life with the artificiality of life in Rome. Some have even believed that the book was meant as a satire upon Roman life. But this is not probable. As it stands, the book gives an interesting sketch of the manners and customs of our Saxon forefathers, embellished no doubt, but as nearly correct as Tacitus could judge.

Tacitus wrote a *History*, consisting of fourteen books, of which unhappily only four and a portion of the fifth remain. The work gave an account of the history of twenty-seven years, between the deaths of Nero and Domitian.

The work called the *Annals* must have been a history of great importance. It began with the reign of Augustus and went on to the death of Nero. Much of it has been lost, but much remains. In the *Annals* the chief events are arranged chronologically, and Tacitus of course does not write as a contemporary historian.

Tacitus was a master of style. His work is always good, sometimes brilliant. But as a historian he leaves much to be desired. He wrote for effect and he sacrificed fact for art when it suited his purpose. Probably he did not mean to be unfair. But in the empire he saw only Rome, and in Rome he saw only the Senate. It was nothing to him that emperors like Tiberius and Claudius were working earnestly for the welfare of the many millions in the provinces so long as they disregarded the interest of a score of Roman aristocrats, who thought that the world revolved for their special benefit. This spirit, which is unfortunately not peculiar to Tacitus but is shared by many ancient historians, permeates his writing and diminishes its historical value. If an emperor did not please the Senate, then all that was good in his life is treated lightly and anything that was evil is painted in the blackest colours. The picture is effective but too lurid to be true to nature.

To Tacitus belongs the honour of having been the first heathen writer to distinctly notice Christianity. We have already quoted the passage in dealing with the reign of Nero. Tacitus was a child of about six years when the persecution of which he speaks took place. He does not believe in the charge of incendiarism which was brought against the Christians, but thinks they were criminals and deserving of the severest punishment. Pliny the Younger writes in much the same tone, and from their views upon this subject we can see how little we can rely upon the opinions of ancient historians where those opinions are not supported by the evidence of facts.

DECIMUS JUNIUS JUVENALIS (Juvenal) was born at Aqui- 55.
num. He was a rhetorician, but had served in the army and was in Britain with Agricola. Sixteen satires written by him are extant, published in five books, and dealing with the social vices of his age. The verses are forcible but often coarse, and it would seem that Juvenal only saw one side of life, and that by no means the best side. Some of his satire, such as that which describes love of finery and pride of birth, is widely applicable even at the present day.

C. PLINIUS CÆCILIUS (Pliny the Younger) was nephew 61.
and ward of Pliny the Elder, and was born at Como. He studied under Quintilian, became an advocate, and afterwards filled many public offices. What we know of his life is derived chiefly from his own letters. These were collected by himself and were written in some measure with a view to publication, but they are not the less interesting on that account.

The most valuable part of the collection is to be found in the letters from Pliny to Trajan with Trajan's replies. From these we can gather some light as to the methods of Rome's provincial rule. We have already noticed in dealing with the reign of Trajan two of the letters, one which shows how greatly averse Trajan was to the establishment of associations which however harmless they might appear to be he thought always

tended to become political; and the other written concerning the treatment of Christians in Bithynia. This last letter with Trajan's reply is of the greatest interest, but has already been fully dealt with in our history. Like Tacitus, Pliny had no evidence against the Christians; they met early, sang hymns, and took oath not to commit crimes, that was all he could find out about them; nevertheless it was clear that they followed a perverse and extravagant superstition, and were worthy of death.

Another of Pliny's letters, already noticed, gives an account of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, in connection with which the elder Pliny met his death. The letter is to Tacitus, and is of much interest.

Pliny's letters give good pictures of the Roman society of his day, and show that their writer, though by no means great, was a highly cultured man.

75. C. SUETONIUS TRANQUILLUS was a friend of Pliny and private secretary to Hadrian. He fell out with the emperor and was dismissed, after which he employed himself at literature. The chief work of his which is extant deals with the lives of twelve emperors, from Julius Cæsar to Domitian. The work is rather biographical than historical; he has collected a large number of anecdotes about the emperors, sometimes scandalous, mostly exaggerated, and often untrue. Nevertheless they give a picture of a sort of the court life of that day.

Suetonius also wrote the biographies of certain illustrious men, of which are extant in part the lives of Terence, Horace, Lucan and the elder Pliny.

100. M. CORNELIUS FRONTO, a Numidian by birth, and a man of considerable learning, was chosen by Antoninus as tutor to his adopted sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. A palimpsest found at Milan gives a number of letters which had passed between Fronto, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus and various friends, as well as some short essays. Afterwards,

upwards of 100 new letters were discovered on a palimpsest in the Vatican Library.

Fronto was famous in his time, and a sect of rhetoricians arose who were called Frontoniani. His letters also are interesting because of the glimpses they give of the simple daily life of Antoninus Pius and of other matters. But the style is strained and affected, and the composition gives little evidence of ability of a high order.

Though we have mentioned in this chapter the names of a certain number of historians, poets and rhetoricians who flourished in the first two centuries of the empire's history, we must not forget that under the empire for more than five centuries a very large proportion of Roman literary work was not performed upon any one of these lines, but was carried on in connection with Roman jurisprudence. If poetical talent was becoming somewhat feeble in the empire, legal talent was during those centuries at its best. Some of the greatest minds of that or any other age were at that time devoted to legal study with momentous results. In certain important countries of Europe Roman law is still accepted as common law; in other important countries it has a direct influence; in all European countries its influence is felt. We have already dealt with this subject incidentally as occasion demanded, and want of space and perhaps the nature of our work renders more detailed reference impossible. But it is worth remembering that if in its later years the Roman Empire did not produce any very important poets, it did produce some of the greatest lawyers the world has ever seen.

CHAPTER XX.

COMMODUS.

180. THE historians who have been so indulgent to Marcus Aurelius have dealt out very hard measure to his son. With the exception perhaps of Nero, no other Roman emperor has had so many opprobrious epithets heaped upon his head. He was "atrocious," "monstrous," "worthless," contemptible," no name was bad enough for him. There are, however, no facts in his brief reign to justify such epithets. They are largely the product of senatorial spite. The record of his evil doings has been exaggerated, and some of the tales about him are apocryphal. The story of the two reigns can be given in a few words. Marcus Aurelius flattered the senators, and Commodus persecuted them, therefore the former was an angel of light, and the latter a spirit of darkness. We do not justify Commodus for persecuting the senators. But his action was not altogether unreasonable as we shall see.

Commodus, like Nero, succeeded at a fatally early age to the imperial throne, and was subjected to temptations which would try the strongest and the most virtuous. But there is no reason to believe that he was worse than the young nobles by whom he was surrounded, and in some respects his actions were greatly to be commended. During his reign, for example, the persecution of the Christians ceased. Indeed, they enjoyed favour. Hippolytus tells us that Marcia, the concubine of Commodus, sent for the Bishop of Rome to inquire what confessors were then in the Sardinian mines, the usual place of exile for Roman Christians, chosen because of its unhealthiness. On his supplying a list of the names, Marcia obtained an order of release from the emperor, and sent it by a presbyter to the governor of the island, who delivered up the prisoners.

Irenæus tells us that the Christians during the reign of Commodus enjoyed all the privileges of the commonwealth, were permitted to go unmolested by land and sea wherever they chose, and were even found in the imperial palace.

Seeing how many hard things have been said against Commodus and Marcia let these at least be remembered to their credit.

The accusations against Commodus begin with the usual Roman lie. He is suspected, says Dion Cassius, of having hastened the death of his father by the administration of poison. Of course there is no atom of foundation for the suggestion. Marcus Aurelius died of fever at the age of fifty-nine, a worn-out man.

Commodus is next attacked, and even by modern historians, because at his father's death he at once made peace with the tribes and returned to Rome. It is assumed that he thus abandoned results which his father was just on the point of achieving. As details of the war are most meagre this is mere guess work. It is probable that Marcus Aurelius had difficulty in holding his own in these frontier wars and only did so by yielding to the tribes and giving them settlements in Roman territory. Both emperor and empire were exhausted in wars which were yielding no recompense for the hardships they entailed. It is just as likely that in hastening to make a treaty with the tribes Commodus was acting in accordance with his father's dying instructions.

More disingenuous still is the suggestion that Commodus abandoned the war because he desired to return to the licentious pleasures of the capital. The accusation consorts badly with the fact that for the first three years of his reign Commodus is acknowledged to have ruled well.

During his early years Commodus ruled with moderation and success. Like his father he had refused to bind himself never to take the life of a senator, but there was at first no bad feeling between himself and the senatorial body.

In the third year of his reign, as he was returning from the

amphitheatre to the palace through a dark portico, an assassin rushed upon him with a drawn sword, shouting: "The Senate sends you this". The assassin was seized by the guards and Commodus was uninjured, but the incident made a deep impression upon his mind. The responsibility for the attempted assassination was shifted on to the shoulders of Lucilla, the widow of Lucius Verus, the late emperor, who is declared to have been jealous of the reigning empress, and, therefore, tried to kill Commodus. As this lady was remarried and to a senator the attempt to lay the crime upon her shoulders seems irrational. In any case certain senators were implicated. Commodus believed so at all events, and had ground for his belief. From that time he became suspicious of the senatorial body. He could see that they were unfriendly and would supplant him if they could. We can hardly wonder if he suspected them as secret enemies, and did not wait until they had time to strike again with the assassin's knife. Public informers were again employed and some of the senators were executed. The execution of one enemy breeds ten and so the evil spread.

The usual charges were made against Commodus concerning the employment of favourites and probably with the usual lack of foundation. In the majority of cases such charges were the offspring of envy. Favouritism was but another name for ministerial government.

Perennis was for a time the chief minister. He was prefect of the Prætorian Guards and apparently a man of great ability. He aimed, however, at ousting the senators from military appointments and substituting men of the equestrian order. This was enough, his enemies accused him of aspiring to imperial power, and so worked upon the emperor that at last they obtained the warrant for his execution.

Perennis was succeeded by Cleander. Of him a great historian writes: "He was a Phrygian by birth; of a nation, over whose stubborn but servile temper blows only could prevail. He had been sent from his native country to Rome, in the capacity of a slave."

Gibbon's judgment with regard to the Phrygians is based upon an expression in one of Cicero's speeches, scarcely sufficient evidence upon which to condemn a whole race. But such is history. As for Cleander having been made a slave it was his misfortune. Slaves sent from their native countries to Rome were often better men than their masters, in education and even in birth. Much of the literary work and most of the commercial work of Rome was in the hands of slaves and freedmen. Cleander is said to have sold justice to the highest bidder. If this be true then he was worthy of condemnation. We cannot condemn him as others have done for erecting baths, porticoes, and places of exercise "for the sake of diverting the public envy".

During the reign of Commodus Rome suffered from 189.
another outbreak of the plague. It is said that as many as 2,000 persons died daily. Pestilence and famine often stalk side by side, and this was the case in Rome. The people, filled with misery, rioted and demanded a victim. The enemies of Cleander easily persuaded the people that he was responsible for the famine, and his head had to fall before the riots could be quelled.

Two accusations are made against Commodus, which seem mutually contradictory. He is said to have been grossly licentious, and at the same time a magnificent sportsman.

Very likely Commodus was bad enough. The tone of Roman society was hopelessly immoral, and a young emperor would inevitably be tempted. But ancient historians are notoriously unreliable in matters of this sort. It was their constant habit to accuse those of whom they disapproved of everything that was abominable. Throwing mud was their greatest delight. But even in this there should be some attempt at consistency. It is difficult to understand how Commodus could have been at once a profligate of the very lowest type, and a sportsman of the very highest, "equalling the most skilful of his instructors in the steadiness of the eye and the dexterity of his hand."

"Whether he aimed at the head or heart of the animal, the wound was alike certain and mortal. With arrows, whose point was shaped into the form of a crescent, Commodus often intercepted the rapid career and cut asunder the long bony neck of the ostrich. A panther was let loose; and the archer waited till he had leaped upon a trembling malefactor. In the same instant the shaft flew, the beast dropped dead, and the man remained unhurt. The dens of the amphitheatre disgorged at once a hundred lions; a hundred darts from the unerring hand of Commodus laid them dead as they ran raging round the arena" (Gibbon, i., p. 92).

Making every allowance for exaggeration and for the precautions which would certainly be taken to protect the person of the young emperor, we cannot believe that these things could have been performed by one who spent the balance of his time "dissolved in luxury," and in the enjoyment of pleasures of the basest sort. Superb archery such as has been described demands an amount of nerve, a clearness of vision and a steadiness of hand which those who have mingled with sportsmen are not wont to associate with gross licentiousness and loose living. If critics are inclined to say that in any case such exhibitions were beneath the dignity of a Roman emperor we may agree with them, yet let us not forget that Commodus was only between twenty and thirty, just at the age when the best and most noble of our English youth are passionately addicted to sport, and are encouraged to excel at it by the plaudits of the best of the English people.

Finally, Commodus is said to have attained the summit of infamy by daring to enter the lists as a gladiator. "The meanest of the populace," we are told, "were affected with shame and indignation, when they beheld their sovereign . . . glory in a profession which the laws and manners of the Romans had branded with the justest note of infamy."

The laws and manners of the Romans were responsible for many inconsistent things, and amongst other things for this that they compelled men to fight to the death, in order that

the citizens might have sport, and counted them infamous because they did it. A gladiatorial show was infamous if you like. But the infamous persons were not the wretched combatants but the spectators, the lords and ladies whose signals determined whether the defeated and prostrate victim should have his throat cut out of hand, or be spared in order that he might afford their highnesses further sport. When Commodus descended into the arena, and fought as a gladiator in engagements which we are informed were seldom sanguinary, his conduct was undignified, but it was plucky, and the word infamous should not have been used. Fighting wild beasts and gladiators in the arena was not sport fit for an emperor, but it was, after all, nobler sport than hounding Christians to death.

There is some doubt as to the manner of the emperor's 192.
death. Fatigued with hunting, he ate and drank freely, and then fell asleep. Some said that Marcia, his mistress, employed a man to strangle him, others that he died of apoplexy. Death under such circumstances is not uncommon, and the body often presents the appearance of strangulation. We need not, therefore, believe the worst.

Commodus was thirty-two years of age, and had reigned for thirteen years.

CHAPTER XXI.

PERTINAX, JULIANUS, SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

192. PERTINAX.—When the senators learned that Commodus was dead, they met, and with tumultuary votes, that is, votes moved by one senator and chanted by the rest, declared his memory infamous, reversed his honours, erased his titles from monuments, and threw down his statues. They even insulted his dead body, though we may hope that the best of them held aloof. It was at times such as these that the senators showed how little they could govern themselves, and therefore how unfit they were to govern the Roman people.

At daybreak the leaders of the guards and the senators met in conference and elected a new emperor. Their choice fell upon P. Helvius Pertinax, one of themselves. Pertinax was an excellent man, who had risen from the ranks, had become a general of distinction, and had filled important public offices. He was now prefect of the city, and sixty-six years of age.

Pertinax ruled well, fully justifying the Senate in its choice. Following the example of Antoninus Pius, he made over his private property to his wife and son, thus separating his private purse from the public money. Exiles were recalled, informers were disgraced, public expenditure was reduced, and taxes were remitted. Pertinax is credited with still wider reforms, both fiscal and agrarian, but he could scarcely have done more than to have contemplated these seeing how short was his reign.

The new emperor pleased neither soldiers nor populace. Commodus had been open-handed, and this was remembered in the face of the economy of Pertinax. Commodus had been

indulgent to the soldiers: Pertinax was severe. Accordingly when he began to introduce military reforms and to touch the privileges of the guards, they would have none of him. Two abortive attempts were made to assassinate him, and then some hundreds of soldiers marched to the palace and slew him in cold blood.

The reign of Pertinax lasted for but eighty-six days. He was a good man and worthy of a better fate.

DIDIUS JULIANUS.—Elated by their success in getting rid 193.
of Pertinax the guards negotiated with Flavius Sulpicianus, his father-in-law, prefect of the city, demanding to know what donative he would give if they raised him to the throne. We need not judge Sulpicianus harshly for thus negotiating with the murderers of his relative; had he refused the guards in the temper in which they then were, he might have shared his fate.

Whilst negotiations were pending, a wealthy senator named Didius Julianus was also approached, and agreed to give the soldiers £200 apiece for the prize. His offer was accepted, and he was hailed as emperor. The senators made the best they could of it, and conferred upon their enterprising colleague the imperial power.

The open sale of the imperial dignity to Didius Julianus was only another step in a very degrading process which had been at work amongst the soldiers for some time. Claudius was the first who gave a donative to the soldiers on his accession. Since his reign it had been the rule. Marcus Aurelius though he succeeded quietly gave £160 to each of the guards. The practice was most injurious to the interests of the empire. Clearly it was to the advantage of the soldiers that the emperor should be often changed, for a new emperor meant a new donative.

Being at headquarters the Prætorian guards were the first to profit by this way of choosing emperors. But they were not to have a monopoly of the speculation. There were regi-

ments more powerful than theirs, and it had already been discovered that emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome.

The news that the chief magistracy of the empire had been sold to the highest bidder spread, and was received with indignation by all the soldiers who had not shared in the plunder. Amongst these the most indignant were the soldiers of the frontier armies. There were three of these, one in Britain commanded by Albinus, one in Pannonia commanded by Septimius Severus, and one in Syria under the generalship of Niger.

The three armies were well-balanced as regards strength, the soldiers were in good fighting trim, they had confidence in their generals, and they were full of contempt for the show regiments who had presumed to constitute themselves king-makers for the empire. Each army accordingly declared its own general emperor, and demanded to be led to Rome.

Of the three armies that of Severus was nearest to the capital. Accordingly, the soldiers were assembled and Severus harangued them, promising them £400 apiece if they put him on the throne, twice the sum that Julianus had given. The soldiers were well satisfied; they hailed him as emperor and set out without delay.

Advancing by forced marches Severus soon approached the city. Julianus was panic-stricken, and the guards knew that they could not cope with the army of the Danube. Accordingly, when Severus sent messages to Rome declaring that his only mission was to punish the murderers of Pertinax, and when he privately informed the guards that if they yielded he would spare them, they deserted Julianus with one accord. The Senate then met, deposed and executed the wretched emperor of sixty-six days, and elected Severus in his stead.

193. SEVERUS.—Though L. Septimius Severus had gained the throne in such an irregular fashion he was not unworthy of it. He was an African by birth, but of good family, and had held important military commands under Marcus Aurelius

and Commodus. He was a tried soldier and a successful general.

On his arrival at Rome Severus ordered the soldiers of the guard to lay down their arms and then disbanded them, and banished them on pain of death to the distance of one hundred miles from Rome. He then proceeded to deal with Niger and Albinus. They were able and popular men, and Severus would probably have been willing at first to consent to joint-rule to conciliate either or both. But it was not so to be.

Severus first marched against Niger and defeated him in two engagements, the former near the Hellespont, the latter in Cilicia. In Cilicia Niger was slain. Byzantium was strongly garrisoned and refused to surrender, so Severus laid siege to that city. Whilst the siege was in progress he crossed the Euphrates, and reduced some parts of Mesopotamia. Byzantium resisted with great pertinacity for three years, and at last only yielded to famine. Its inhabitants were put to the 196.
sword and its fortifications were demolished. This was an error of judgment, for the city presented a strong bulwark against Asiatic invasion.

Whilst these matters were in progress Severus had secured the neutrality of Albinus by making him Cæsar and promising him the succession. But now that he had disposed of his enemies in the East the emperor had no fancy for divided rule and turned his forces westward. Albinus was governor both of Britain and Gaul, so that he mustered a powerful army. The forces encountered in Gaul near the city of Lyons and a very terrible battle was fought. It ended with the defeat and death of Albinus.

Severus was now undisputed master of the Roman world, and he might well have been magnanimous to the partisans of his defeated rivals. But it was quite otherwise. Large numbers of provincials whose only crime had been that they obeyed their Roman governor, were punished with exile, confiscation, even death. The cities which had supported his rivals had to purchase pardon at a great price. The senators

suffered terribly. They had cursed Commodus because he treated them badly. But Severus' little finger was thicker than his loins. Twenty-nine senators were condemned to death, their estates were confiscated, their families were involved with them in ruin.

198. After these things the emperor set out again for the East to repel the invasion of the Parthians who were ravaging Mesopotamia. He crossed the Euphrates and carried out a series of brilliant military operations. He remained in the East for three years, and visited Arabia, Palestine and Egypt.

From the East Severus returned to Rome and remained there tranquilly for seven years. During those years he ruled despotically, but not without regard for humanity and justice. His government rested entirely upon military force. He had dismissed the guards who numbered 10,000, and substituted his own soldiers who numbered 50,000. They were the picked troops of the frontier armies, soldiers drawn from many nationalities, and they held Rome in awe.

The troops in Rome were well paid, and their officers lived extravagantly, so that they were no small burden upon the State. But this was the least of it. The worst feature of the case was that the proximity of so many troops to Rome had a most injurious effect upon civil jurisdiction. Whilst the troops were under the iron hand of a man like Septimius Severus their influence might not be so malign, but should an emperor arise who either could not or would not control them civil jurisdiction would be paralysed and Rome would be under martial law.

Severus carried on the dole system in Rome on a more lavish scale than had yet been attempted, and the displays by which he amused the populace were specially magnificent. He also built freely, and the arch which commemorates his triumphs is still one of the sights of Rome. The provinces were justly governed. It was the policy of Severus, himself a provincial, to level distinctions between Italy and the provinces as much as he could.

Æmilianus Papinianus, the most celebrated of Roman jurists, flourished in this reign. He was the teacher and friend of Severus, who made him prætorian prefect jointly with Mæcius Lætus, and supreme judge of Rome. Papinian was a man of high moral worth, and in matters where he was concerned we may be sure that the law was administered with impartiality. Other eminent jurists, such as Paulus, Modestinus and Ulpian, also flourished about this time. They were pupils of Papinian.

Unfortunately Jews and Christians had little reason to thank Severus. He issued an edict forbidding, under severe penalties, conversion either to Judaism or Christianity. Many Christians suffered martyrdom during his reign, especially in Africa and Egypt.

Near Carthage the martyrdom of Perpetua, Felicitas and their companions took place. The narrative of the martyrdom is well authenticated. Perpetua and Felicitas, both young married women with infant children, were stripped, enclosed in nets and gored by a wild cow. Wounded, but not killed, Perpetua rose and asked permission to bind her dishevelled hair that she might not appear to the crowd to be mourning. Seeing Felicitas lying wounded and crushed, she went to her and lifted her up. Then the two women, the one a lady by birth, the other a slave, but both equally noble in the sight of God, stood side by side awaiting the end. They were mercifully despatched by the sword. There is a mosaic of Perpetua in the archbishop's palace at Ravenna.

Severus married as his second wife a distinguished Syrian lady, Julia Domna. By her he had two sons, Bassianus (better known as Caracalla) and Septimius Geta. Severus associated both of his sons with himself in the imperial dignity.

After remaining about seven years at Rome Severus found 208.
it necessary to proceed to Britain, where the province was suffering greatly from the inroads of the Caledonians. He took his two sons with him. He was no longer young, and being a martyr to gout had to be carried in a litter.

Severus made a brave effort to conquer the Caledonians and went far north, meeting the enemy in several battles. The Caledonians seem to have avoided a general engagement for the most part, but to have done great mischief to the Romans by cutting off stragglers and by ambuscades. The weather also tried the soldiers greatly. Severus, therefore, was not unwilling to grant peace when they asked for it.

On this occasion Severus strengthened the earthwork between the Forth and Clyde (Graham's Dyke), and completed, if he did not entirely build, the stone wall alongside Hadrian's fortification between the Solway and the Tyne.

The emperor had long been in failing health and he died at York in the sixty-fifth year of his age, having reigned for eighteen years.

CHAPTER XXII.

CARACALLA, MACRINUS, HELIOGABALUS.

CARACALLA.—Severus desired that his sons, Caracalla and 211.
Geta, should reign as joint-emperors, and the soldiers, loyal to his memory, proclaimed them as such. The young men returned to Rome, were formally approved by the Senate, and administered jointly. The arrangement would have been trying under the best of circumstances, but was made specially difficult in this instance from the fact that there was enmity of long standing between the brothers.

In order to make things easier it was proposed to separate the interest of the brothers by dividing the empire between them. In a treaty which was being drafted it was arranged that Caracalla, the elder brother, should take Europe and Western Africa, while Geta took Asia and Egypt, the Bosphorus dividing the empires. The Romans are said to have received these suggestions with surprise and indignation, but in the reign of Diocletian the geographical division of the empire between two or more emperors was made a principle of government.

Whilst the treaty was being considered Geta was murdered. 212.
The deed was done by some centurions in the presence of Julia Domna, the mother, who was wounded in trying to save him. Caracalla may have directly instigated the deed or the centurions may only have believed that he would be glad to have his brother out of the way. Caracalla is said to have been present at the murder, but the description of the event seems coloured and unreliable. Geta's name was afterwards mentioned with respect, he was buried with all honour, and medals are still extant which show that he was consecrated. This

does not carry with it the impression of wilful and deliberate fratricide.

Caracalla now reigned alone. The legal name of the emperor, and the one which appears on medals and inscriptions was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. Caracalla was a nickname derived from his favourite dress, the long tunic worn by the Gauls. But it is the name by which he is best known.

The murder of Geta was followed by a proscription, and the exile and execution of all presumed to be enemies of Caracalla. Twenty thousand persons are said to have suffered death, but we may safely assume this to be a great exaggeration. Two thousand would probably be nearer the figure.

Amongst those who fell was Papinian, the jurist, of whom we have already spoken. Severus greatly esteemed him, and it is likely that he accompanied the emperor to Britain and was present at his death at York. Severus is said to have commended his sons to his care. Papinian was prætorian prefect, but Caracalla on his accession deposed him from this office, which does not seem to have been one for which a lawyer would be specially suitable. It is said that after the murder of Geta, Caracalla requested Papinian to write a vindication to be read before the Senate, but that he refused. This may have been partly the reason, but the true cause of his execution probably was that the soldiers disliked him exceedingly, and that Caracalla let his head fall in order to please them.

That same year Caracalla took a step of enormous importance to the subjects of the empire. He extended the citizenship to all persons who were not slaves. Thus all governed by Rome now called themselves Romans, and Italy and the provinces became equalised. The change is said to have been made primarily in order that the emperor might raise succession duty over a wider area. This would be one legitimate effect of the change, but the reform was none the less laudable.

The military consideration would certainly weigh with Caracalla as much as the financial. Great changes were tak-

ing place in the army. Italy no longer supplied the best recruiting ground. The army was largely composed of provincials. Surely it was better that these should realise their citizenship.

But there was another reason for the change. This was the most important reform which had been carried in the Roman Empire since the days of Augustus. Those whose prejudice against Caracalla prevents them from believing that he could do anything praiseworthy, profess either that he degraded the citizenship by his action or that Roman citizenship was now scarcely worth having. In speaking thus slightingly of the reform they are thinking chiefly of the suffrage and are forgetting the private law aspect of the case. In the Roman Empire the peregrinus or alien had only the rights which belonged to the law of nations, that is, the common, natural rights of man. He was debarred from all civil law rights, these were confined to the citizen. One favoured class of aliens called Latini had certain rights of the citizen but not others. The provincials were mostly looked on as aliens though the *jus Latii* had been conferred as a favour on particular communities. Vespasian had bestowed the *jus Latii* on the whole province of Spain. The difference between the full citizen and the alien, equally born in the empire, was a very real difference, felt at every turn. The alien could be treated with gross cruelty and injustice and had scarcely any appeal. A man not legally in the citizen class was under the greatest disability at private law and was baulked of justice at every turn.

The Emperor Caracalla bestowed Roman citizenship on all the provinces. After this the word alien had its modern significance. It applied to persons born outside the limits of the Roman empire, and to citizens who for some offence had their citizenship taken away. This extension of Roman citizenship was therefore of enormous importance, and must have been felt as the greatest of blessings by millions of Caracalla's subjects whom he thus by one act of justice relieved

from the continual and vexatious burden of their alien condition. By this act which some historians pass over so lightly Caracalla did more for the happiness of the people than he could have done had he added many provinces to the empire.

Other useful enactments date from this reign. There are 200 constitutions of Caracalla extant in the Code.

213. After these events Caracalla left Rome and travelled in the provinces, carrying on successful campaigns on the Rhine, in Egypt, and on the Euphrates. Some say that he never returned to the capital, but there are indications that he revisited Rome in 214 A.D. after his Rhine campaign.

Caracalla is represented by historians as a monster of iniquity, who made every province in turn the scene of rapine and cruelty. We are not inclined to defend war at all, but we fail to see why it should be deemed laudable in one reign, and spoken of as rapine and cruelty in another. Caracalla seems to have carried out his father's policy both in civil administration and military affairs with ability, and there is no reason to believe that the wars waged by him had any element of cruelty from which wars in general are free.

215. One of the worst acts of Caracalla is said to have been a massacre ordered at Alexandria, in consequence of some allusion by the citizens to the assassination of his brother. This is a distorted view of the matter. There had been serious conspiracies in Egypt, and Alexandria was the scene of many tumults. The city had given the Emperor Severus much anxiety. Perhaps the fact that he was a native of the West African province did not commend itself to the Egyptians. Evidently Caracalla thought a severe lesson necessary, so he gave the city over, not to massacre, but to plunder. Doubtless in defending their goods many were slain. The act was harsh and cruel, if you like, but it was not the capricious petulant act which so many have represented it to have been.

216. From Egypt Caracalla went to Mesopotamia, where he crossed the Euphrates and reduced the country beyond. He had a high admiration for Alexander the Great, and perhaps

some vague idea of emulating his exploits. Admiration for Alexander was a feature of the age.

Caracalla further developed the phalanx which, it will be remembered, Hadrian introduced. Those who understand the subject declare that Caracalla's further development was a great benefit.

During his second campaign in Mesopotamia, whilst visiting the temple of the Moon at Carrhæ, Caracalla was assassinated by a soldier to whom he had refused promotion. The assassin was instantly killed by a soldier of the guard.

Caracalla was an able man, and a useful emperor. He was no angel, but to speak of him as "a monster whose life disgraced human nature" (Gibbon, chap. vi.) is absurd. He was neither better nor worse than the rest.

MACRINUS.—Macrinus, the præfect of the Prætorian Guards 217
had accompanied Caracalla to the East, and it is said to have been at his instigation that the emperor was assassinated. The story, however, seems very doubtful. Certainly, if Macrinus had anything to do with the assassination he would have done his best to conceal the fact, for Caracalla was popular with the soldiers, and had they suspected Macrinus, he would probably have fallen a victim to their fury.

For the moment there seemed no better choice than Macrinus, so the soldiers proclaimed him emperor, and the Senate approved the choice. Both soldiers and Senate were half-hearted for Macrinus was not a distinguished man.

Macrinus carried on the war against the Parthians for a time, but was defeated with heavy loss, and had to retire to Syria, where he made Antioch his head-quarters. The defeat greatly diminished his prestige. He also lost popularity with the soldiers by trying to reform the army, and especially by reducing their pay and privileges. True this was for the moment confined to the new recruits, but the veterans feared that it would be their turn next.

There lived at Emesa a sister of Julia Domna the widow of

Severus, by name Julia Mæsa. Her grandson, a boy of thirteen, was a priest in the temple of the sun-god, and had taken the name of Elagabalus or Heliogabalus, in honour of the deity. His real name was Bassianus, so that he was both nephew and namesake of Caracalla.

There were many Easterns in the army, and the soldiers, seeing the boy in the temple, handsome and richly dressed, declared that he had his uncle's features, and a report spread that he was Caracalla's son. When therefore Macrinus became unpopular in the army, the grandmother put the boy forward and the troops stationed at Emesa proclaimed him emperor.

Macrinus did not instantly crush the mutiny and it spread quickly, for the temple of the Sun was rich and could bribe freely. The mutiny spread throughout Syria, and when Macrinus marched against the rebels he was defeated and fled in disguise. Shortly afterwards he was seized in Chalcedon and slain, and the armies joined forces under the banner of the boy-emperor.

218. HELIOGABALUS.—Varius Avitus Bassianus, who is better known to us as Heliogabalus, now sat upon the imperial throne. He took, in compliment to his reputed father, the name of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

The records left by historians concerning this prince represent him as a very vile person indeed, but we believe his wickedness to have been exaggerated. The reason for the exaggeration is not hard to find.

First, however, let us remember that Heliogabalus was scarcely more than a child when he became emperor and that he reigned for less than four years. All the enormities which have come down associated with his name must have been perpetrated between his fourteenth and eighteenth years. Some think that he may have been a year or two older, but not much. He was, therefore, the merest lad from the time that he was crowned until the time when his mangled body was thrown into the Tiber.

If, then, Heliogabalus became so corrupt, on whom must we lay the blame? The boy was being trained as a priest in the temple of the sun-god at Emesa when the soldiers found him. The worship of the sun as the giver of life was very ancient and not specially degrading. Certainly the idea was more elevating than the worship of images as it was carried on in Rome. We may presume, therefore, that Heliogabalus did not learn to be vicious in the temple at Emesa. If he became vicious, he became vicious in Rome. A boy of fourteen is taken from his mother's side, placed upon the Roman throne and surrounded by so many temptations that in less than four years he is only fit to be thrown into the Tiber. It is little to the credit of Rome.

We think, however, that the ancient historian has blackened the character of Heliogabalus with a purpose, and that the truth must be found by reading between the lines. Heliogabalus began his life as a priest of the sun-god and knew little or nothing of any other religion. He ascribed that which he fondly imagined to be his good fortune to this deity, and he arrived at Rome full of gratitude to his celestial patron. Arrived there, he determined to at once introduce sun-worship. Knowing nothing of theological differences and the bitterness engendered by them, he thought that his task would be easy. He built a magnificent temple on Mount Palatine and tried to make it the centre of Roman worship. The Roman emperor was the pontiff, and he desired to be high priest for the people. So little did the boy understand about the matter that he even wanted the Jews and the Christians to worship in his temple, and look upon him as their high priest. "Dicebat præterea, Judæorum et Samaritanorum religiones, et Christianam devotionem illuc transferendam, ut omnium culturarum secretum Heliogabali sacerdotium teneret" (*Scriptores Hist. Aug.*).

To this temple of the sun-god he either removed or tried to remove the objects which the citizens specially venerated. Amongst these were the palladium and ancilia, the statue and

shields which fell down from heaven, and upon the preservation of which the safety of Rome depended. It reads strangely that one of the crimes charged against Heliogabalus was his superstition.

But cannot we imagine the storm of wrath which Heliogabalus would bring down upon his head by such well-meant, but hopelessly inconsiderate, action. Imagine the consternation and wrath of the priests who had charge of the palladium and ancilia, and had thriven for centuries upon that particular superstition, at finding their occupation gone and Syrian priests taking the very bread out of their mouths. There were hundreds of temples in Rome and thousands of priests. They belonged to the wealthy families, for their occupation was most lucrative, and every individual pagan priest in Rome would pour out venom upon the young emperor. And so they did. Vile stories about what was done in the temple of the Sun; vile stories about the nature of the worship which Heliogabalus wished to introduce, instead of the good old religion which had served the state for a thousand years; vile stories about the boy himself.

There was another weapon ready to the hands of the priesthood, and we doubt not that it was freely used. When a young emperor was inclined to be too much in earnest in a cause there were ways of diverting him well understood by the Romans. Nero had been ruined in this way, why not Heliogabalus? We doubt not that those who surrounded the boy did their best to corrupt his mind, and if there is any truth in the tales which are related to his discredit we blame him less than the vile men and women of the Roman court.

Some of the things we read about this boy-emperor, over which historians make such ado, are harmless enough. Before he reached Rome he sent to the senators a picture of himself. He thought that it would please them, but, instead, it filled them with disgust. Yet it was but an ordinary picture of a gaily attired and decorated Eastern prince in robes of silk and

gold, with many gems and bracelets and a tiara. Any one who has lived in India has seen the same sort of costume a hundred times. There was no need to be disgusted with a young Oriental prince for dressing according to the custom of his country.

It is related as a matter to his discredit that he carried his mother with him to the Senate-house, and demanded that she should always be present when matters of importance were debated.

On many occasions the boy-emperor acted foolishly. He played tricks upon reverend signors, not realising the immense store placed by a Roman upon his dignity. But if the Romans were foolish enough to turn a child into an emperor what else could they expect? Pretending to smother his guests with roses at one time, and at another letting loose wild beasts upon them, whose teeth had been drawn and their claws carefully pared, were tricks quite beneath the dignity of a Roman emperor, but not beneath the dignity of a schoolboy, and Heliogabalus never was more.

These things we can understand, and we can also regretfully believe that through the temptations pressed upon him the lad fell into evil ways. But that a boy of fourteen could change into a devil incarnate and contrive to compress into three years and nine months the catalogue of crime laid to his charge we cannot believe.

When Heliogabalus had been three years king he adopted his cousin Alexander, and invested him with the title of Cæsar. Alexander was but thirteen years of age, so that the statements concerning his virtues are only made for the sake of throwing a deeper shadow upon the character of his rival. It was easy to find an excuse for rebellion, and the Prætorian guards always on the outlook for a donative, and eager, no doubt, to preserve the dignity and morals of the Roman court, murdered the wretched boy and threw his corpse into the Tiber.

Gibbon says: "His memory was branded with eternal

infamy by the Senate; the justice of whose decree has been ratified by posterity". This is quite true, but how far posterity has been content to accept the verdict of the Senate without troubling to think out the question for itself is another matter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ALEXANDER SEVERUS, MAXIMIN, THE GORDIANS, MAXIMUS AND BALBINUS, GORDIAN III., PHILIP.

ALEXANDER SEVERUS.—The year before his assassination 222.
Heliogabalus had adopted his cousin Alexander as his successor, and he now ascended the throne. He was born 208 A.D., and was, therefore, but thirteen and a half years old on his elevation.

Alexander was a Phœnician by birth, and had spent his childhood mostly at Emesa. When Heliogabalus was chosen as emperor he and his mother Julia Mamæa accompanied him to Rome.

Owing to Alexander's youth the direction of political affairs rested chiefly in the hands of the queen mother, who was a woman of great capacity.

For the guidance of affairs of state a council was elected consisting of sixteen senators, before whom important questions of legislation and administration were brought. At the head of the council was Ulpian, a man of Phœnician birth, like the emperor himself, and a distinguished jurist. A second member of the council was Paulus, a third Modestinus, both distinguished jurists.

The fact that such men were on the council sufficiently proves its merits. By its influence better men than formerly were placed in office, and reforms were introduced into both civil and military administration. But the virtues of Alexander and his able ministers were more hateful to the soldiers than the vices of former monarchs. There was much discontent and rioting, and street fights often took place between the guards and the populace. Then there was a mutiny

against Ulpian himself. He had been made prætorian prefect, though we do not know the date of his appointment. As prefect he was not popular and the soldiers suspected, probably with good reason, that he was the author of the reforms to which they objected. Accordingly they broke into the
228. palace and murdered him in the very presence of the emperor and his mother.

The eminent historian Dion Cassius, who had served several monarchs in succession, also became obnoxious to the guards, and they clamoured for his life. Dion escaped to Campania, and afterwards obtained permission from the emperor to retire to Nicæa in Bithynia, his native town. There he lived quietly until his death.

232. After some years of peace Alexander became involved in war with Persia. The Persians, so great in former times, had for many years been under the heel of Parthia. Of late they had risen against their oppressors, and under a leader bearing the ancient name of Artaxerxes had again formed a Persian kingdom. Artaxerxes was the descendant of one Sassan from whom the dynasty which he formed was called that of the Sassanidæ. This dynasty ruled Persia for four hundred years. It was overthrown by the Moslems. The last king, Yezdegird, was assassinated in 651.

The Persians now demanded that Rome should surrender the provinces which she had taken from the Parthians. In the war which ensued Alexander claimed to have been victorious. Some doubt has been cast upon this, but it is clear that the Persians were checked in their Western advance. Seeing also that no provinces were restored and no ground lost to the empire in any way, Alexander must have had a fair amount of success. But he had to return hurriedly as news reached him that Gaul was being attacked by German tribes.

233. After celebrating a triumph in Rome, Alexander set out for Gaul. The Germans were devastating the country, and it seems likely that the soldiers did not deem him strong enough to deal with the difficulties of the situation. Before, therefore,

he had made any progress in the campaign they mutinied and slew him. Julia Mamæa his distinguished mother perished 235. with her son.

All that we know of Alexander is to his credit. Though not a Christian, he was kind to Christians. He placed an image of Christ in the chapel of the Imperial Palace. Statues of Abraham, Orpheus and others were also there. Christians were welcomed to the palace, and Christian bishops were received at court. The emperor copied the Christian method of electing office-bearers in electing civil magistrates, ordering that the names of the candidates should be published beforehand. The Christian maxim "as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them" pleased him so much that he placed this rendering over the door of his palace :—

"Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris".

MAXIMIN.—When Alexander Severus was assassinated the 235. general of the troops in Gaul was Maximinus, a Thracian. He was a remarkable man, of gigantic stature and herculean strength, who had enlisted in the reign of Septimius Severus, had attracted the attention of that monarch by his extraordinary feats, and then had risen step by step until he was now general of the fourth legion.

On the death of Alexander the soldiers proclaimed Maximin emperor. It is said that he was the head of the mutiny against his prince and planned his assassination, but from what we can judge of Maximin's character in other ways we are inclined to doubt it. The Senate detested Maximin and spread abroad stories about his wickedness, for which we fancy there was little foundation.

Maximin was a rough, uneducated soldier. His life had been spent in camp, and for him the army was all in all. As a Thracian he had no special regard for Italy, or Rome, or the Senate, and during the three years of his reign he never visited Rome once. But he knew his work and he did it. The Germans were across the frontier and ravaging Gaul and Maximin

steadily fought them back. He was far better able to cope with the dangers that then beset the empire than Alexander had been.

During Maximin's reign the government of Rome was carried on by his representative, Vitalian, the prætorian prefect, who probably had difficulty in keeping the senators in check, and, therefore, governed tyrannically.

Maximin seems to have been a shrewd, well-meaning and capable man, not at all the brute the historians declare. Had he been so his wife Paullina would not have had so much influence over him. By all accounts she was a gentle and benevolent woman.

Maximin is accused of having robbed the temples of their treasures, and compelled the cities to lay aside their games in order that his avarice might be satisfied. This is most unfair. The defence of the empire was a very serious business. Maximin was fighting on the Rhine and Danube with all his might and the least the people could do was to support him. It was little enough that the temples should part with some of their hoarded wealth and that the people should postpone their amusements at such a time.

At length a revolt arose in Africa on a question of taxation. Some gilded youths, pressed by the tax-collector to part with a portion of their wealth for the service of the State killed the tax-collector and proclaimed Gordianus their proconsul emperor. Gordianus was eighty years of age, but he had a son of forty-six, whose name was associated with his own in the proclamation. Apparently neither father nor son had either qualification or desire for the high position. But they accepted it under pressure, and the senators eager to get rid of their Thracian emperor, ratified the election and declared Maximin a public enemy.

238. THE TWO GORDIANS.—The tenure of office enjoyed by the Gordians was brief. Capelianus, the governor of Mauretania, remained faithful to Maximinus, and took the field against the

usurpers. The younger Gordian met him but was defeated and slain. The elder Gordian then slew himself. He had reigned for two months.

The news from Africa terrified the Senate and the people of Rome. But they had gone too far to withdraw, and two senators, Maximus and Balbinus, were found willing to be elected emperors instead of the Gordians. With them, that all parties might be conciliated, the Senate nominated a boy, grandson of the older Gordian, as Crown Prince.

Maximin heard of these doings with wrath and crossed the Alps at the head of his legions. The Senate meanwhile had ordered the country round about to be devastated and had thrown garrisons into the cities. Maximin laid siege to Aquileia, but the inhabitants resisted strenuously and he made poor progress. It was feared, however, that he would relinquish the siege of Aquileia and march upon Rome, so influence or bribery was brought to bear upon some soldiers of the Prætorian guard and he was murdered whilst asleep in his tent. His son was also slain and several officers who were faithful to him.

MAXIMUS AND BALBINUS.—The two senatorial nominees 238.
now entered Rome in triumph, but not without dread. The soldiers watched the proceedings with sullen looks. Maximin had been chosen by the army, and with all his roughness was a man equal to the emergencies of empire, and able to cope with the dangers by which Rome was surrounded. Their man had been foully murdered and the senators had placed men upon the throne for whom they cared nothing. Not only had this been done without their consent, but it had been done in a way which carried with it the appearance of wanton insult. Accordingly when the palace guards were for the most part amusing themselves at the Capitoline games a body of soldiers broke into the apartments of the emperors, seized and murdered them, and flung their bodies contemptuously into the street.

238. GORDIAN III.—The boy Gordianus, who had been nominated Crown Prince by the Senate, was spared, and, as there was no one else at hand, the soldiers carried him to the camp and saluted him as emperor. He was little more than twelve years of age when these things happened. He was assassinated before he was nineteen and we know little of what happened between.

As the emperor was so young, affairs of State were conducted by his ministers. The chief of these was Timesitheus, who seems to have been a man of much ability. Gordian married his daughter and was under his influence, which was wisely exercised.

242. The Persians invaded Mesopotamia and even threatened Antioch. War was therefore considered necessary and an army marched for the East. Timesitheus had the chief control, but the young emperor was with the army. On its way it halted in Thrace and cleared the province of barbarian invaders, Alans, Goths and Sarmatians.

Owing to the abilities displayed by Timesitheus, the Persians were defeated. Carrhæ and Nisbis were captured, and the Roman army prepared to march upon Ctesiphon. Unfortunately, at this important juncture Timesitheus died. He was succeeded as prefect of the Prætorian guard and commander-in-chief by Julius Philippus, an able but perhaps less worthy man.

Philip is said to have used his high office as a means of fomenting discord, and to have headed a mutiny against the young emperor. One cannot be quite sure about it. Gibbon seems to think that since Philip was an Arabian he must have been a scoundrel, but it does not follow. All we can be sure of is that Gordian was slain and that Philip was, by the votes of the soldiers, declared emperor in his stead.

244. PHILIP I.—M. Julius Philippus was an Arabian by birth. He had entered the Roman army and risen to high rank. On the death of Timesitheus he was made Prætorian prefect, and

on the death of Gordian was made emperor. He proclaimed his son Cæsar, concluded peace with the Persians and returned to Rome. At Rome he was favourably received by both Senate and people, and as he had been elected by the soldiers there seemed some prospect of a long and prosperous reign. But it was not so to be.

The great event of Philip's reign was the celebration of the 248.
Roman millennium, the thousandth year of her existence as a city. The event was celebrated by games of extraordinary pomp and magnificence. The religious ceremonies were conducted in accordance with pagan rites, and were peculiarly solemn and impressive. It has been asserted that Philip was a Christian, but his participation in the rites and ceremonies connected with the games makes this doubtful. It is certain, however, that his disposition towards Christianity was friendly. Origen, writing during his reign, says that God had given the Christians the free exercise of their religion. He even spoke hopefully of the ultimate conversion of the empire. Another writer says of Philip that he exhibited a genuine and religious disposition with regard to the fear of God.

Scarcely were the games at an end when a mutiny broke 249.
out among the soldiers in Mœsia and Pannonia. A senator named Decius, an Illyrian by birth, was dispatched by Philip to quell the mutiny. Decius was a man of presence and ability, and the soldiers perceiving this put their own leader aside and proclaimed him emperor. There is no proof that he instigated this disloyalty; the chances are that he had to choose between death and the purple.

Decius avowed that he was not responsible for what had happened, but Philip had no alternative but to take the field. Gathering what forces he could, he marched towards the frontier; but at Verona he was killed, though whether by assassination or on the battle-field is not clear. His son, also named Philip, who had the title of Cæsar and whom he had left at Rome, was assassinated by the Prætorian guards, so that Decius had now no rival

CHAPTER XXIV.

DECIUS, GALLUS, ÆMILIANUS, VALERIAN, GALLIENUS.

249. DECIUS.—Decius now succeeded to the imperial throne. This monarch has been lauded for the excellence of his administration. As he only reigned for two years we fear that the praises of the historian are partly attributable to the fact that he initiated a fierce persecution against Christianity.

We have said that Philip, the former emperor, was well-inclined towards the Christians, and that they had much prosperity during his reign. With the accession of Decius all this was changed. Partly this has been accounted for by assuming that Decius looked upon the Christians as partisans of Philip. This may have been, but it would not account for all. We think that Decius was probably a convinced pagan, that he believed that the Roman empire and paganism must stand or fall together, and that he looked upon Christianity as hostile to Rome's best interests. He, therefore, determined to crush it once for all.

The persecution was the more terrible because it was so unexpected. In many parts of the empire the Churches had been undisturbed for thirty years, in some provinces for a yet longer period, so that a generation had arisen which scarcely knew what persecution meant.

The persecution which now burst forth was bitter beyond measure. The prudent counsel of Trajan that Christians were not to be sought out was disregarded, and rigorous search was made for all suspected of non-compliance with the State religion. The inquisition began at Rome, and extended throughout the provinces.

In every city on receipt of the imperial rescript a day was

appointed for the Christians to present themselves before the magistrate, renounce their religion and sacrifice at the altar. Some yielded, others stood firm. Those who refused to conform were thrown into prison and tortured. Such as fled were outlawed, and had their goods confiscated. The clergy wrote: "The world is devastated, the ruins of the fallen are on every side".

The fury of the emperor raged specially against the bishops. The bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Jerusalem were put to death. Others were exiled or thrown into prison. Some withdrew from their sees for a time, hoping that in their absence the members of their Churches might be spared.

The attention of Decius was diverted from the Christians by an invasion of the Goths. This is the first time we have had occasion to speak of this remarkable race, who would one day take rank amongst Rome's greatest enemies.

There is a province in Sweden called Gothland, and legend makes this the cradle of the Gothic people. But it is more likely that they were German, that they lived on the southern shore of the Baltic, and that they invaded Sweden and settled in the province which bears their name. They were of much the same race as our Anglo-Saxon forefathers.

The Goths are first marked historically by Tacitus as dwelling at the south-east corner of the Baltic, that is in Eastern Prussia. West of the Goths dwelt the Vandals, west of the Vandals the Saxons, with whom the Britons had afterwards to deal. They were all folk of the same sort, hardy, brave and adventurous.

Nowadays these prolific races find room for enterprise and overflow in the United States of America, but in earlier times this outlet was not accessible. Accordingly, when population became congested the lust of conquest seized them, and they sallied forth in huge companies to find room for themselves by force of arms.

From the Baltic where we find the Goths in the days of Tacitus they wandered southward to the Black Sea. Perhaps

this was in the second century. At any rate in the third we find them firmly planted there, now divided into three nations, the Ostrogoths, or Eastern Goths, the Visigoths, or Western Goths, and the Gepidæ.

The plains where they dwelt had been roamed over for centuries by tribes vaguely called Scythian. These had swarmed from Asia, from Tartary and Turkestan. Many Scythians still dwelt amongst the Goths. But the Goths themselves were Teutons, and had no inclination to proceed eastward. They therefore lay on the Black Sea with their faces towards the temperate climate of the Roman Empire.

In the reign of Decius the Goths had a king called Cniva.
249. He crossed the Danube at Novograd, and fought against Gallus the governor of Mœsia and Decius the young Cæsar. He then laid siege to Philippopolis a very wealthy city. The younger Decius came to its relief, but was utterly overthrown. The citizens then surrendered, many were massacred and a great deal of treasure was taken. It would also seem that Priscus the governor of Macedonia, having been taken prisoner, was persuaded by the Goths to let them proclaim him emperor in opposition to Decius.

250. Hearing of these things Decius set out from Rome. With his departure the persecution of the Christians abated. Priscus was killed and for a time all went well. The Goths, partly demoralised by their success at Philippopolis, retreated and offered to relinquish both captives and spoil if they might go home in peace. But Decius would not hear of it, and ordered Gallus to get between them and their homes whilst he attacked them from behind. A terrible battle was fought in the Dobrudscha.
251. The Goths, knowing the country better than the Romans, stationed themselves near a morass and by feigning flight drew the Roman troops into it. Thus trapped they were hopelessly beaten. The younger Decius was slain early in the fight. The emperor himself with thousands of his followers perished in the swamp. His body was never seen again.

GALLUS.—The death of Decius and his son left Gallus the 251.
commander-in-chief of such forces as survived, and the soldiers proclaimed him emperor. With the usual Roman fondness for slinging accusations about, one historian accuses Gallus of treachery, but that is a cry easily raised after a defeat.

Though the Goths had been so successful they were glad to make peace, and Gallus was glad to make peace with them. The terms were hard; they were to return to their own land with their booty and prisoners, and were to receive an annual payment from the empire so long as they left the province undisturbed. The Romans were far from satisfied, for it was the first time that Rome had actually purchased a peace by paying a tribute, but probably Gallus had no alternative.

The tribes who made the peace were faithful to their agreement, but others, encouraged by their success and not bound by their obligations, swarmed over the Danube and invaded Illyria. They were successfully opposed by Æmilianus, the governor of Mœsia and Pannonia, whose soldiers, flushed with victory, hailed him imperator on the battle-field. Gallus set 253.
out to encounter his revolted officer, and had reached the plains of Spoleto in Umbria when his soldiers, bribed perhaps by the emissaries of Æmilianus, revolted, and slew both him and his son.

During the short reign of Gallus a terrible pestilence visited the empire. It came from Ethiopia, down the valley of the Nile, and through the Asiatic and Illyrian provinces to Italy. Many provinces were afflicted by pestilence, drought and famine, and there was great misery throughout the empire.

In hope of obtaining deliverance from these calamities an edict was issued ordering all persons to sacrifice to the gods. It was observed that the Christians did not obey this edict and the fury of the populace was directed against them. The pestilence lasted for fifteen years, and though it brought persecution and death to many Christians it showed to the pagans how kind Christians could be. When the pestilence was at its worst and some wretches were even plundering the houses of

the dying, the Christians extended help to all who needed it. In the hope that their enemies might be won by love they divided the cities into districts, buried the dead, nursed the sick, and alleviated misery as far as their means would allow.

253. ÆMILIANUS.—Though Æmilianus had been proclaimed emperor by his troops he was not yet acknowledged by the Senate. He was still with the troops in Umbria and negotiating with Rome when a rival arose. At the time when Gallus first heard of his revolt he sent the censor Valerian, a noble of distinction, to bring the legions of Gaul and Germany to his aid. Valerian arrived too late to save Gallus, but he determined to avenge him. Accordingly he marched to Spoleto and confronted his legions.

Fortunately a battle was avoided. The forces of Valerian were so greatly superior to those of Æmilianus that the soldiers of the latter deserted, slew their leader, and ranged themselves under the banner of Valerian.

253. VALERIAN.—Gallus and Æmilianus were dead and P. Licinius Valerianus was proclaimed emperor by the soldiers, and willingly accepted by the Senate. He seems to have been a man of acknowledged merit; but he was now over sixty years of age, almost too old to face the difficulties by which the State was surrounded. His son Gallienus was proclaimed Augustus and became his colleague.

Many foes were now assailing the empire. The Franks or "Freemen" tribes, who lived on the Lower Rhine and Weser, were swarming into Gaul. Gallienus went to oppose them. He could not drive them back, but he evidently persuaded them to change their plans, for they passed through Gaul, crossed the Pyrenees and invaded Spain. Here they remained for some years, then they passed across the straits to Mauretania, the West African province. They were the first of the northern races to invade Africa and their fair hair caused great astonishment to the natives.

Trouble came also from the Alemanni, the "All Men," descendants of the Suevi, who two centuries before had so fiercely opposed Julius Cæsar. They now crossed the Alps and invaded Italy, advancing as far as Ravenna. Aurelianus, afterwards emperor, went against them and restored peace, but he had to let them settle south of the Alps.

Another peril came from the eastern side of the empire. We have seen how the Persian monarchy, so long dormant, was restored by Artaxerxes. This monarch was succeeded by Sapor, an equally able man, who conquered Armenia, captured Carrhæ and Niblis, and even reached Antioch. Valerian took the field in person against this conqueror, and set out with a considerable army. But the way was long and the army was so weakened by famine and pestilence that Sapor found it an easy prey. There is no certainty about the events which followed. The Romans seem to have been surrounded and captured or slain. Very few escaped. Valerian disappears 260.
from this time, leaving no trace.

GALLIENUS.—P. Licinius Gallienus, who had been co-ruler with his father, now reigned alone. Though he has been severely censured by critics, as most unsuccessful men are, there is no reason to doubt that he was a well-intentioned and able man. Only a very great man, indeed, could have grappled with the misfortunes which now overtook the empire.

After the defeat of Valerian, Sapor overran Syria, Cilicia and Cappadocia with his victorious army. He sacked Antioch, laid Tarsus in ashes, and destroyed Cæsarea, the chief city in Cappadocia. Returning laden with booty, he received an unexpected check at Palmyra. This prosperous and independent city was governed by Odenathus, "Prince of the Saracens". The name of Saracen, scarcely known until this time, was afterwards applied to the followers of Mohammed and became very famous. At present it was applied to the mixed Syrian and Arabian tribes over whom Odenathus ruled.

Odenathus, recognising Sapor's superiority, was willing to

be his liegeman and sent him a present. But Sapor received his advances with scorn, and thus made him his enemy. Accordingly Odenathus harassed the Persians on their homeward journey and inflicted heavy loss upon them before they crossed the Euphrates. For this service Gallienus gratefully conferred upon Odenathus the title of King of Palmyra. Unfortunately, Odenathus was assassinated a few years after, whereupon Zenobia his wife took possession of the throne as Queen of the East.

Whilst the Romans were thus suffering disaster in Persia, the Goths were again assailing the empire. We have seen how the Gothic tribes spread from Prussia southward until they reached the Black Sea, on the northern shores of which they settled down. When they found that the Black Sea was a lake they built ships, and sailed hither and thither, ravaging the cities along its shores.

Many Goths had settled in the Crimea and its neighbourhood, and there their ships could be well sheltered. One set of Goths sailed round the Asiatic coast of the sea, sacked Trebizond and returned laden with spoil. Other Goths sailed through the Bosphorus, captured Chalcedon and ravaged the rich province of Bithynia. Another expedition sailed as
262. far as Ephesus and plundered the well-known Temple of Diana.

267. Later still, a great expedition captured Byzantium, passed through the Sea of Marmora, ravaged the islands of the Archipelago, and landing in Greece, sacked Corinth, Sparta and Athens. Coasting round, the expedition sailed up the Adriatic and viewed the coast of Italy. Here they divided, and half went home by land across Mœsia, the rest returned with the fleet through the Black Sea.

These expeditions caused widespread alarm and misery. The condition of the empire was one of deep gloom. Foreign tribes were pouring into the provinces in the north; in Eastern Europe the Goths were working their will; in Asia the Persians were invincible, and in Egypt civil war was raging. To

crown all, the pestilence which had so long afflicted the empire was still uncontrolled.

Economically the position of the empire was as bad as it could well be. Population had declined, poverty everywhere abounded, taxes could scarcely be collected at all. The coinage had been tampered with until it was little more than base metal washed with silver.

Under these distressing circumstances we can hardly wonder if the central power was paralysed. The legions on the frontier had to do the best they could, every one for itself. Their permanent camps had now become towns; they had families and farms, and they had to look out for themselves. Moreover the unarmed provincials looked upon the legions as their natural protectors. Little wonder if they chose their own leaders as "imperatores," and ignored the central power. Thus independent princes sprang up in every direction.

In the reign of Gallienus nineteen of these able officers came into existence. They are called "pretenders," and alluded to as if they were tyrants and traitors, but this is a misuse of terms. Some of them amply justified their existence. In Gaul Postumus repulsed the invaders and restored tranquillity to the province. He really established a subordinate empire which was maintained for a time by his successors, and which gave peace and security to Gaul. In the East we have seen how Odenathus did good service to the empire. On the Danube and in Greece the "pretenders" were not so successful.

One of the nineteen independent princes was Aureolus. He commanded the legions in Illyria, but not content with guarding his own province must needs invade Italy. Against Aureolus Gallienus marched. He defeated him and besieged Milan where he had taken refuge. But when success seemed assured to Gallienus a conspiracy was fomented against him and he was assassinated. Before he died he nominated Marcus 268.
Aurelius Claudius as his successor.

We have described the sorrows of the Christians during the reign of Decius, and again when the plague first attacked

the empire in the reign of Gallus. The year which saw the death of Gallus and the succession of Valerian saw the death of Origen, a renowned theologian of Alexandria. Though mistaken in some of his views, Origen was a man of high courage and deep devotion. During the Decian persecution he was tortured, cast into an unhealthy dungeon, and loaded with chains. He was afterwards released, but his sufferings killed him in the end. He was the first to write a regular commentary on the Scriptures.

When Valerian ascended the throne he treated the Christians with clemency, but afterwards, falling under the power of the pagan priests, he became their bitter enemy. Hoping that if their bishops were away the congregations would conform he drove the bishops and teachers into exile. Amongst the banished was Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, a writer whose works have come down to the present day.

When Valerian found that the congregations still assembled he issued a more rigorous edict :—

258. "Let bishops, presbyters, and deacons be immediately put to death by the sword: let senators and knights be first deprived of their rank and possessions, and if they still continue Christians, let them suffer the due punishment of death; let women of condition be deprived of their estates and banished. Christians in the service of the palace are to be treated as the emperor's private property, and distributed to labour in chains on the imperial estates" (Neander, i., p. 192).

Under this edict many suffered. At Rome Bishop Sixtus and four deacons were surprised in the act of celebrating Divine service in the catacombs and were put to death. Sixtus was the fifth Bishop of Rome in succession who had suffered martyrdom in eight years. Four days after, Laurentius, another deacon, was roasted alive. Bishop Cyprian returned from his place of exile to Carthage, and after ministering to the Church for twelve months was beheaded.

260. To the credit of Gallienus be it said that as soon as Valerian his father was taken prisoner and he reigned alone he

stopped the persecution. He even issued an edict permitting them to worship freely, and restoring their lands, church buildings and cemeteries. Thus he recognised the Christian Churches as legal corporations, for only such could hold property according to Roman law.

In a former chapter we commented upon the strange circumstance that certain historians said hard things against the emperors who befriended the Christians and lauded those who treated them with cruelty.

No man showed more animosity to the Christians than Marcus Aurelius who is lauded to the skies. His son Commodus befriended the Christians and his memory is heaped with insult.

Septimius Severus persecuted the Christians and was a fine fellow, his son Caracalla did not persecute and was a monster.

Philip was an Arabian robber of no merit, but was favourable to Christianity, Decius who succeeded him persecuted with fury and was a burning and a shining light.

Valerian was a most worthy emperor and Valerian persecuted, his son Gallienus abruptly stopped the persecution and reinstated the Christians in their privileges as citizens, and Gallienus is handed down to posterity as a worthless fellow.

Facts like these are worthy of some consideration. In an age when historians were too often mere partisans and when they belonged to the literary classes to whom the priests also belonged, it seems clear that the attitude of the emperor towards the State religion influenced the attitude of the historian towards the emperor. Christianity was no longer the faith of a despised few. The edicts of the emperors show what a hold it was taking upon society. The State religion was in danger and there seems good reason to believe that the worth of the monarch was measured primarily by an ecclesiastical standard.

CHAPTER XXV.

CLAUDIUS, AURELIANUS, TACITUS, PROBUS, CARUS, CARINUS AND NUMERIAN.

268. BEFORE Gallienus died he was able to advise his officers to choose as his successor Claudius, a general who was commanding an army near Pavia. Claudius was an Illyrian by birth, and had risen to distinction under Decius, Valerian, and Gallienus. Gallienus had shown him no little kindness. To this kindness Claudius made but a poor return, for he wrote a letter to the Senate in which he insulted the memory of his benefactor, and bragged about the wonderful things which he himself would accomplish.

Claudius reigned for two years. During his reign there was a vast influx of Goths. They poured into Thrace and Macedonia, no longer as raiders but as settlers, bringing their wives, their children, and their worldly possessions with them. The total number is estimated at 320,000, and they were supported on the rivers by 2,000 skiffs.

Against this host Claudius marched forthwith. A battle was fought at Naissus (Nisch) in Servia and the Goths were defeated. Such as were neither slaughtered nor captured were driven into the Balkans where they speedily perished of cold and famine.

Claudius announced his victory to the governor of Illyricum in a bulletin, as follows: "Claudius to Brocchus.—We have destroyed 320,000 of the Goths; we have sunk 2,000 of their ships. The rivers are bridged over with shields; with swords and lances all the shores are covered. The fields are hidden from sight under the superincumbent bones; no road is free from them; an immense encampment of waggons is deserted.

We have taken such a number of women that each soldier can have two or three concubines allotted to him."

It would perhaps be too much to expect that Claudius should have considered whether there might not be a better way of dealing with tribal movements than by wholesale massacre. Other emperors had already permitted tribes to settle in the empire: could not he have done the same. Clearly the Goths had come in the hope of settling and if Claudius had met them in a proper spirit all would have been well. The Roman Empire was sadly depopulated. There was room for all who cared to come. Kindly dealt with the Goths would in one or two generations have looked upon the empire as their home.

Some writers give Claudius and men like him great credit for their energetic policy. We cannot see matters in this light. We believe the policy to have been miserably short-sighted and cowardly. There is little more reason for praising the policy of Claudius than there would be for praising an American president who chose to meet the 400,000 emigrants who annually cross the Atlantic with fire and sword.

If we need not blame emperors overmuch for not understanding better the signs of the times, on the other hand we need not commend them for butchering and enslaving hundreds of thousands of their fellow-creatures. They did no good to the Roman Empire by this policy. They only made it yet more hateful and heaped up wrath against the day of wrath.

That which followed seems almost like retributive justice. So vast was the number of unburied corpses that they bred a pestilence and Claudius caught it and died.

AURELIAN.—Before Claudius died he nominated Lucius Domitian Aurelianus as his successor. Aurelian was also an Illyrian by birth. He had commanded the army of the Danube, and was an excellent soldier. 270.

The first act of the emperor deserves high commendation. The Goths, encouraged by the death of Claudius once more

pressed into the empire, and Aurelian offered to relinquish the province of Dacia to them, doubtless on condition that they would not cross the Danube to molest Mœsia. He withdrew the Roman forces from Dacia, and the Danube became again the frontier of the empire.

By this action the empire was somewhat curtailed in area, but this was greatly to its advantage. Dacia became well populated, and well cultivated, and as an independent state formed a splendid barrier between the empire and the regions beyond. The Roman subjects in Dacia either remained under Gothic rule or removed south of the Danube, and added strength to Mœsia and Pannonia.

Excepting for about ten years during the reign of Constantine, there was peace after this settlement between Rome and the Goths for nearly a century. Had the same wisdom been shown elsewhere the empire would have been reduced in size, but increased in strength.

The same methods were not adopted with the Alemanni. They invaded Italy on the Rætian frontier, but were defeated and surrounded. A conference was held, but they were treated haughtily, and little effort was made to come to terms. Accordingly they broke through the Roman cordon, crossed the Alps, ravaged Lombardy, and marched towards Rome. They defeated the Romans at Placentia, but in Umbria were themselves defeated, and hewn to pieces.

The audacity of the Alemanni in thus advancing on the sacred city, caused a panic in Rome, and the fortifications were looked into. The walls of Servius Tullius, the original defence of the city, had a circuit of seven miles. A new city had grown up outside these practically undefended, so walls were built enclosing all. The new fortification, known as the wall of Aurelian, was twenty-one miles long.

Aurelian's Eastern policy was not admirable. We have seen how Zenobia succeeded her husband Odenathus, becoming Queen of Palmyra. She now ruled a considerable portion of Syria, and her State served as a buffer between the Roman Em-

pire and Persia. Zenobia was a woman of rare ability, and not unfriendly to Rome. She had indeed given her sons a Roman education. She was ambitious and in the neglected condition of the empire had become suzerain of provinces which theoretically belonged to Rome. But this might have been adjusted. The remote Asiatic provinces were a source of weakness to the empire, and it would have been better had Aurelian strengthened the hands of Zenobia, and fostered her State. But this would not have been in accordance with Roman traditions. Aurelian determined to destroy Zenobia, 272.
so he attacked her, defeated her, and besieged her capital. When the queen saw that resistance was vain she fled, but was captured before she could cross the Euphrates. 273.

Palmyra now surrendered, and Aurelian, having robbed it of its treasures and left a garrison, set out for Italy. On his way he heard that his garrison had been slain. He returned, massacred the inhabitants, and destroyed their city. This was the end of Palmyra. A small village took its place, and still stands, amidst the ruins of the great city of the past. Thus did a short-sighted and over-bearing emperor blot out a beautiful and useful city, destroy a kingdom which was fulfilling a useful purpose, and bring to nought the lifework of a queen who was ruling her people with wisdom and acceptance. The life of Zenobia was spared, and, after she had graced in chains the triumph of her conqueror, she was allowed to end her days in comfort at Tivoli.

Before leaving the East Aurelian crushed out a revolt in Egypt where Tirmus, a wealthy paper manufacturer, had become an independent prince. Having accomplished this Aurelian proceeded to Rome.

About the same time the empire of the Gauls came to an end. For some years Gaul had managed its own affairs. It became independent under Postumus the governor, who ruled well for ten years. Lælianus succeeded him, and after a few months Victorinus, who reigned for a year. On the death of Victorinus, Victoria, his mother, reigned for a time. Thinking

the weight of empire too great a burden for a woman to bear, Victoria unhappily transferred her power to Tetricus. He betrayed the Gallic army and province to Rome. His army fought fiercely, notwithstanding its betrayal, but was defeated at Chalons. Tetricus was rewarded for his villainy with the governorship of a province.

274. Aurelian now returned to Rome for his triumph, and according to the standards of the time he doubtless deserved it.

Notwithstanding his success Aurelian was unpopular and a conspiracy was formed against him in Rome. He crushed it with merciless severity. The prisons were thronged and the executions were numerous. Shortly after these things Aurelian set out for Persia, perhaps partly to distract people's minds and find occupation for his troops. But he had made
275. irreconcilable enemies, and on his journey he was assassinated by members of his staff.

275. TACITUS.—The vacancy caused by the death of Aurelian was not at once filled. The private soldiers were fond of him and angry at the assassination, and they refused to nominate any of their officers as his successor, or to permit them to profit by Aurelian's death. They therefore referred the matter to the Senate and desired that they should make the appointment. But this was not easily done. Since it had become the fashion to assassinate emperors, the position was not so much coveted and six months passed before any one could be persuaded to fill the post.

At length Marcus Claudius Tacitus was appointed. Tacitus was a descendant of the historian, and would have been quite suitable for the position had he been twenty years younger. But he was seventy-five years of age. Nevertheless, as election to the post of emperor seemed practically equivalent to sentence of death, the Senate doubtless thought that an old man had less to lose by accepting the office than a young man would have. Perhaps, also, they hoped that the soldiers would respect his grey hairs.

Even old men cling to life, and Tacitus protested vigorously against being made emperor, but when his protests were unheeded he bravely accepted the situation and did his best. He dealt wisely with some Scythian tribes who had overrun Asia Minor. They had a legitimate grievance against Rome, and Tacitus, by acknowledging the grievance and meeting them with justice and liberality rather than with the sword, induced them to retire. Scarcely was the arrangement carried out when he died. He had reigned for six months.

FLORIANUS.—On the death of Tacitus the soldiers were 276.
divided as to the choice of an emperor, some supporting Florianus, the half-brother of Tacitus, whilst others rallied round Probus, the governor of the East. Florianus marched against him but was deserted by so many of his soldiers that he saw the hopelessness of his cause, and either slew himself or was slain by his own men.

PROBUS.—Marcus Aurelius Probus, who now ascended the 276.
throne, was a native of Sirmium in Pannonia, and forty-four years of age. He had distinguished himself as a soldier and had been appointed by the Emperor Tacitus governor of the East. After the death of Tacitus his soldiers pressed him to become emperor, and the Senate approved of their choice.

The first task undertaken by Probus was the never-failing one of freeing Gaul from German settlers. The better to accomplish this, he is said to have offered a piece of gold for every German head brought in by the soldiers. We read that 400,000 were thus slain and paid for, but for the sake of our common humanity we will hope that this is an exaggeration.

Probus led an army across the Rhine and as far as the Elbe. He contemplated reducing Germany to a province. Seeing that this had proved an impossible task in the palmy days of the empire, it was scarcely worth his while to attempt it. Ultimately he abandoned the idea, and, instead, built a high wall, 200 miles long, between the Rhine and the Danube.

Unless Probus did this for the sake of giving his soldiers employment, it was waste of time. Rome was no longer in a position to defend a wall of this character, and in a few years it was in ruins.

During the reign of Probus a remarkable voyage was undertaken by Franks. Some members of the tribes who lived in Holland had been either tempted or coerced into settling upon the coast of Pontus. Becoming home-sick they seized a fleet which was lying in the Black Sea and set sail. They passed through the Sea of Marmora and into the Mediterranean. There they sacked several coast ports, including Syracuse. Thence they made their way through the Straits of Gibraltar, the Bay of Biscay and the North Sea, until they at last reached Holland. The voyage was a daring one, and their success must have encouraged the spirit of adventure which afterwards took such hold upon the tribes dwelling in that part of Europe.

The reign of Probus was not free from civil war. Saturninus, the commander of the eastern provinces, was proclaimed emperor at Alexandria, apparently against his will. Probus defeated his forces and would have spared his life, but his own soldiers slew him.

Having conquered his enemies Probus celebrated his victories by a triumph of special splendour. On this occasion eighty gladiators, reserved with 600 others for the brutal sports of the arena, broke from their confinement. They were chased and massacred by the soldiers, but not until they had sold their lives at a high price.

Doubtless with laudable intentions, Probus endeavoured to utilise the idle moments of his soldiers by employing them upon works of public utility. But the life of soldiering does not fit men for patient toil, and they resented this interference with their leisure. At last, being set to drain the marshes of Sirmium, a feverish and disagreeable task, they mutinied, and slew the emperor.

CARUS.—Carus, Prætorian prefect under Probus, was elected 282
emperor in his stead. As he was sixty years of age, he associated his sons Carinus and Numerian with himself in the government. Carus was an able man, somewhat of a Spartan in his habits.

Leaving Carinus to take care of the West, Carus marched against the Persians, Numerian, his younger son, being with him. He ravaged Mesopotamia and the cities of Seleucia, and Ctesiphon surrendered. But one night a thunderstorm burst upon the camp, and Carus died, but whether by a natural death, for he was ill at the time, by lightning, or by the hand of the assassin, we cannot say.

The soldiers, who were informed that the emperor had been struck by lightning, demanded that the war should be abandoned, and Numerian started with them on the homeward journey. On the way he also died under suspicious circumstances. For his death Aper, his father-in-law, was blamed, but it is not easy to discern any substantial motive for such a deed. He could scarcely have hoped to succeed Numerian seeing that Carinus was upon the throne.

CARINUS.—When Carus died his son Carinus, who had 283.
been associated with him in the empire, and had remained in charge of the West, was recognised at Rome as his successor. Numerian was, as we have seen, returning with the army from the East, but the brothers never met again.

During the tumult that followed the death of Numerian, 284.
the army of the East proclaimed Diocletian emperor. Aper, father-in-law of Numerian, was placed upon his trial, but Diocletian, with a fine show of righteous indignation, slew him before he could open his mouth in his defence.

The action of Diocletian was most suspicious, and leads us to fear that he was at least partly responsible for the death of Numerian and, perhaps, also of Carus. He was captain of the body-guard, and little could presumably have been done without his concurrence.

Hearing what had happened Carinus set out to meet Diocletian. Carinus had a good army and was an energetic man. He gained early success, and won what seemed a decisive battle at Margus, a town in Mœsia, near the Danube. But after the battle, and in the midst of victory, Carinus was assassinated. The vices of Carinus are given as the reason for the assassination, but it is easy to blacken the character of an unsuccessful man. Had Diocletian died after the battle and Carinus continued to reign we wonder what the verdict of the historian would have been.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DIOCLETIAN.

WHEN Diocletian ascended the throne the condition of the 284.
Roman Empire was far from satisfactory. The frontier territories had suffered greatly from the ravages of war, the central districts had not been entirely spared. Italy had been invaded, and the capital had been so seriously menaced that new fortifications had become imperative. War, famine, and pestilence had thinned the population, lands lay waste, towns were almost without inhabitant. Poverty abounded, taxes were collected with extreme difficulty. The empire was dissolving, and if Diocletian by the new methods of government which he introduced postponed the hour of dissolution even for a time it must be remembered to his credit.

Diocletian was an Illyrian, about forty years of age, who had served under Probus, Aurelian, and Carus. After the deaths of Numerian and Carinus he had no rival. He was a politician as well as a soldier and had sane ideas about government.

Diocletian was the first emperor who looked facts squarely in the face and acknowledged that the vast area of the Roman Empire could not be ruled from one centre. Though the period of transition was a lengthy one the partition of the Roman Empire into East and West may be said to date from his reign. Of course there had been assistant emperors before, but territorial division and the deliberate sharing of the responsibilities of government, so that each man became a sovereign within his allotted area, had not been before attempted.

Diocletian began his reforms by associating with himself 286.
Maximian as colleague. Maximian was a Pannonian, a rough

man, but a most capable soldier. To Maximian he allotted the northern frontiers, and the care of the Western portion of the empire, whilst he himself governed the East. Theoretically the emperors were equal, but Diocletian had practically by right of priority a superiority in rank, and he always maintained a mental and moral ascendency over his colleague. Strictly co-ordinate jurisdiction was in fact not part of Diocletian's scheme, he always intended that no matter how many emperors there might be one should be supreme.

In a few years it became clear that even two emperors did not suffice to grapple with the Roman problem so two subordinate emperors, "Cæsars," were added. The men chosen
293. were Galerius and Constantius, of whom the former married Valeria, daughter of Diocletian, the latter Theodora, step-daughter of Maximian. The empire was partitioned amongst the four; Diocletian taking control of Thrace, Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor; Maximian of Italy and Africa; Galerius of the Danubian provinces and Illyricum; Constantius of Britain, Gaul and Spain. Each ruler had sovereign executive power, but Galerius and Constantius had no legislative power, nor had they power over the imperial revenue, nor the right of appointing imperial officers. Their military powers also were subordinate to Diocletian and Maximian, who triumphed for their victories.

Thus there were four distinct centres of political life and the empire became for a time federal. Doubtless by agreement not one of the sovereigns lived in Rome. Diocletian made Nicomedia, a city of Bithynia, his capital; Maximian lived in Milan; Galerius at Sirmium; Constantius at Trèves.

The city of Rome was hard hit by these arrangements. Of the four sovereigns not one was Roman or had any special sympathy with Rome. Diocletian never visited the capital as emperor until he went to celebrate his triumph. He had then been ruling for nearly twenty years. The city that had domineered over the world and concentrated all power within her walls was now pushed aside. The Senate lost such power and

consideration as it still enjoyed. The Prætorian guards, who had wrought so much mischief in Rome, were abolished and in their place two regiments kept the peace. This alteration in the position of the city of Rome was permanent and it was the most important issue of Diocletian's rule.

The imperial authority was now entirely emancipated from constitutional limitation. The emperor was autocrat pure and simple. Diocletian assumed the state of an Oriental sovereign. He wore a diadem, his palace attendants were eunuchs, visitors prostrated themselves before his throne.

Italy and Rome were finally reduced to the level of the provinces. A uniform system of administration was established throughout the empire, controlled by the emperor and his ministers. The new system was more expensive perhaps than the earlier. There were four imperial courts, and a greater number of important officers. In the presence of much poverty this was of consequence. Yet the greater efficiency must have been an ample compensation.

In many respects the new system was an obvious improvement. The soldiers of the rival armies were better satisfied, since each army had now its own imperator. The risk of assassination was less for it was hardly worth killing one man out of four. The risk of disputed succession was less, for the crown princes were ready to step into the emperors' places when they passed away. Doubtless also the various localities received more attention and profited from the fact that their ruler was at hand. Diocletian's system could not give permanent satisfaction, for it did not restore to the people the right of self-government of which they had been deprived. But the new system was an improvement, and though it did not endure yet it tided the empire over its immediate difficulties and prolonged its life for a time.

Before the appointment of Galerius and Constantius several important things had happened. In Gaul there had been a serious rebellion. The Gallic peasantry had long been treated with much cruelty. They were mere serfs, slaves indeed, often

working in fetters for the benefit of Gallic nobles and Roman colonists. They rose in arms against their oppressors, and were so successful that their leaders ventured to assume imperial functions. But Maximian's legions crushed them and their condition seemed more hopeless than ever.

In Britain there was also revolution. It arose in a most unexpected way. The Franks and Saxons, who dwelt on the coasts bordering the North Sea, had taken to piracy on a large scale, and were roaming the seas and ravaging the coasts of Britain and Gaul. Diocletian and Maximian accordingly appointed Carausius, a hardy seaman, as admiral in that region, with the duty of guarding the coasts and suppressing piracy. Carausius made Boulogne his head-quarters and built a fleet with which he did good service. So emboldened was he with his success that he revolted, threw off the authority of the
288. emperors, seized Britain and assumed the purple. He held his own for seven years and may be spoken of as the first British emperor, though he was not in any true sense the head of a British nation. Medals struck during his reign are still extant. Besides governing Britain, Carausius held Boulogne and the adjacent districts. His fleets commanded the Channel and the North Sea and even sailed into the Mediterranean.

290. For a time Diocletian and Maximian recognised Carausius and professed to accept him as a colleague. But the recognition was only meant to be temporary. When they appointed Galerius and Constantius as Cæsars, it was understood that the latter would destroy Carausius.

Constantius proceeded to carry out his task with much deliberation. First he blockaded Boulogne, building a mole across the harbour-mouth, and then besieging the city from the land. Boulogne defended itself with obstinacy, but was at length captured and with it a considerable portion of the British fleet.

Constantius then spent three years in securing the coasts of Gaul and in preparing a fleet for the invasion of Britain.

Whilst these arrangements were in progress Carausius was assassinated and succeeded by Allectus his lieutenant. When 294.
Constantius was ready he despatched his fleet and it made a successful landing somewhere west of the Isle of Wight. Allectus was lying with his army near London and he hurried west to meet the invaders. He was defeated and slain and 296.
the fate of the island was decided in a single battle. When Constantius shortly after landed in Kent all opposition was over.

There were also about this time revolts at Carthage and in Egypt. The former was in Maximian's jurisdiction and was speedily quelled. The Egyptian revolt was more serious. It lay in Diocletian's sphere and he invaded Egypt and besieged Alexandria. The siege lasted for eight months. When the city fell he treated both it and the rest of Egypt with great severity. This was natural, but we cannot sufficiently regret his conduct in ordering the destruction of as many scientific books as could be found in Egypt. He was particularly severe upon those which dealt with alchemy, the precursor of modern chemistry. The Egyptians were deeply versed in this science, and Diocletian, by his barbarism, probably threw back chemical science for many centuries.

The war in Egypt was followed by war in Persia. When Armenia was conquered by Sapor I., Tiridates, the infant heir to the Armenian throne, was carried to Rome for safety and education. In the fulness of time this prince was produced, appointed by Diocletian to the Armenian throne and sent back to his own country to foment rebellion.

At first Tiridates was successful, but afterwards he was driven out by the Persians. Diocletian then sent Galerius with a great army to enforce his will. Galerius made the mistake Crassus had made centuries before, and took the de- 296.
sert route to Mesopotamia. The result was equally disastrous. In the sandy desert the heavily armed Roman was no match for the Persian light cavalry with their bows and arrows, and they were shot down in thousands. Galerius escaped with a hand

297. Next year Galerius again set forth, but this time advanced by way of Armenia, where the Romans could fight under better conditions. They were now more than a match for their enemies, and compelled them to agree to a humiliating peace. Persia ceded Mesopotamia and five provinces beyond the Tigris to Rome. The Khabour became the boundary of the empire, and Tiridates was restored to the Armenian throne. The treaty was not likely to be permanent, but it kept the peace for a time.

302. After these victories Diocletian and Maximian triumphed in Rome. The incident is noteworthy, as this was almost the last grand triumph celebrated in that city. Rome had already ceased to be the capital, and soon her emperors ceased to conquer.

Sad to relate, the reign of Diocletian—a wise reign in many respects—was disgraced by the most terrible persecution which Christianity had yet endured. During his early years the emperor did not manifest any hostility to the Church. His wife and daughter were Christians, as well as many others in the palace. There were also Christians in the army, both among the officers and the privates.

Soldiers were excused from taking part in heathen sacrifices, even though they might be on duty when the sacrifices were being offered. On certain occasions the priests complained that the rites lost their efficacy because of the presence of Christians—profane persons, as they termed them. Diocletian now issued an order that all who lived in the palace should sacrifice to the gods, and that soldiers should either sacrifice or leave the army. Many officers at once threw up their commissions and soldiers retired from the ranks. Diocletian was very angry, and one centurion named Marcellus was beheaded, but the persecution did not go farther for the moment.

303. In the nineteenth year of his reign Diocletian was visited at Nicomedia by Galerius, his son-in-law. Galerius came to deliberately propose measures for the extirpation of Christi-

anity. To us this suggestion seems terrible and inexcusable, but perhaps we should in fairness to the persecutors remember certain things.

Galerius and Diocletian were pagans from their youth. The good old Roman religion, "the religion of their fathers," as Galerius would doubtless term it, was being crushed out by this upstart faith. The Christian Church was becoming stronger every day, and its bishops were in many places more influential than the prefects. It was apparently becoming a dangerous *imperium in imperio*. Unless something were done, and done speedily, the Church would not only thrust aside paganism, but would dominate the empire itself. There must be immediate action and there must be no half measures. Perhaps this is how men like Diocletian and Galerius would have viewed the matter. So they fought Christianity and fought it fiercely, but Christianity won the day.

Diocletian was at first very unwilling to persecute on anything like the scale which Galerius advocated. He called a council to discuss the matter. But the council voted with Galerius, and when he consulted the soothsayers they gave the same advice. He yielded, but stipulated that no life should be taken.

The campaign against Christianity began by the demolition of the church in Nicomedia. The soldiers, after vainly searching for an image of the Christian's God, burned the sacred books which they found and pulled the church down. Next day an edict was published. All Christians were to abjure their faith or be degraded, deprived of civil rights, debarred from bringing actions in the courts. They were liable to be examined by torture. All sacred writings were to be delivered up and burned, the churches were to be demolished and Church property was confiscated. A gentleman who tore down the edict in indignation was arrested and roasted to death before a slow fire.

The edict was published throughout the provinces and it created the utmost consternation. Christianity had made

much progress and had its converts amongst all classes of the people.

Some magistrates carried out the edict willingly, some sought to evade it. Vast numbers of sacred books were burned, and this deplorable fact explains why there are so few manuscripts dating before the reign of Diocletian. Earlier emperors had tried to destroy Christianity by removing the bishops and teachers, Diocletian and Galerius tried to extinguish it by getting rid of its sacred books. So little did the enemies of Christianity understand what it really meant.

Scarcely had the persecution begun when an untoward event happened in Nicomedia. The palace caught fire twice within a fortnight and the emperor's bedroom was in danger. The Christians were blamed, but it is just as likely that the work was done by their enemies. Galerius was still in Nicomedia, and knowing that Diocletian was half-hearted he may have wanted to push him on. Galerius now left Nicomedia, declaring that his life was in danger, and Diocletian began to persecute more fiercely. There was now no stipulation about sparing life. His wife and daughter were compelled to conform, and court officials were burned, beheaded and drowned.

A second edict ordered that all Church officers should be cast into prison. When the prisons were so crowded with Church officers that there was no room for malefactors a further edict ordered that torture should be used to compel the prisoners to worship the gods. A final edict extended the penalties to the entire body of Christians.

The persecutors evidently looked upon these edicts as decisive, for medals were struck to commemorate the triumph of Diocletian over Christianity.

The persecution happily did not rage over the whole empire. Constantius, who ruled in the West, was favourable to Christianity, so that Britain, Gaul and Spain were comparatively free. But as it was necessary to issue the edict, which applied to the whole empire, and to appear to obey it, Constantius pulled down a few churches to save appearances.

305.

When, however, shortly afterwards, Diocletian and Maximian abdicated, and Constantius became himself an emperor, he boldly protected the Church in the Western provinces. Over the rest of the empire the persecution went on.

"From East to West," writes Lactantius, an eye-witness, "except in Gaul, three ravenous wild beasts (Diocletian, Maximian and Galerius) raged incessantly. In the East, under Galerius, the common mode of torture was burning at a slow fire. The Christians were fastened to a stake; at first a moderate flame was applied to the soles of the feet; then torches were applied to all their limbs, so that no part of the body should escape. All the while water was poured upon their faces and mouths lest they should expire too soon; and when at length after hours of agony the heat penetrated to their vitals the dead bodies were burned, their bones ground to powder and thrown into the water."

The persecution was not the work of the people, but of the officials and priests. Many of the pagan citizens sympathised with the Christians in their distress and imperilled their own lives by trying to save them.

In the twenty-first year of his reign Diocletian abdicated. 305.
He was only about sixty years of age, but he was ill, and desired to pass the rest of his life in quietness. He had built a magnificent palace at Salona, on the Adriatic, and to this he retired. He lived about ten years longer, the precise date of his death being uncertain.

When Diocletian retired he insisted on Maximian also retiring and Maximian obeyed him, though much against his will. Thus the supreme power passed to the two Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SIX EMPERORS.

305. WITH the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, the Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius, became emperors, the former ruling the West, the latter the East. Galerius was Diocletian's son-in-law and had much influence over him, so that he was allowed to nominate both the succeeding Cæsars. He chose Maximinus, his nephew, and Severus, allotting to the former Syria and Egypt, to the latter Italy and Africa. He himself had control over Illyricum and Asia Minor, whilst Constantius continued to rule over Britain, Gaul and Spain. But in making this settlement he left out two men whose interests should have been considered, Constantine, the son of Constantius, and Maxentius, the son of Maximian.

Constantine, known afterwards to history as Constantine the Great, was the son of Constantius. When Constantius was chosen by Diocletian as a Cæsar and went to live in Gaul, Constantine was serving with Galerius. He remained in his service and was quickly promoted. He was handsome and popular, and Diocletian designed that he should be one of the crown princes when his father became emperor.

When Galerius passed over Constantine he took alarm and determined to join his father. He therefore left Nicomedia hurriedly and travelled post haste to Gaul. He found his father at Boulogne, on the point of departure for Britain, so he joined the expedition.

306. When, shortly afterwards, Constantius died at York, Constantine was present, and the soldiers proclaimed him emperor. He sent word to Galerius who, though he was exasperated, could not mend matters. He contented himself therefore with

allotting the higher title to Severus and nominating Constantine a Cæsar. Constantine wisely accepted the compromise. It made little real difference. He continued to administer the provinces his father had administered, and reckoned his succession as emperor from his father's death. He resided at Trèves, as his father had done, and governed well.

Maximian, who had abdicated with reluctance, was incensed because his son Maxentius had been passed over in the new settlement, and Maxentius was equally angry. Together therefore they fomented rebellion amongst the guards and people of Rome. The Romans were the more ready for rebellion as they had been neglected for many years. When therefore Maxentius, who was then residing near Rome, promised to remedy their grievances, they gladly proclaimed him emperor.

Maxentius was not himself a brilliant soldier, but Maximian, 306.
his father, who came eagerly to his help, made up for his deficiencies in that respect. At the request of the Senate Maximian again assumed the imperial purple.

As Italy lay in the dominions allotted to Severus, it was his duty to oppose Maxentius. Accordingly he marched into Italy, but the father and son were too strong for him; his legions deserted him and he fell back on Ravenna: where he surrendered and put an end to his life.

Galerius, perceiving that immediate action was imperative, gathered a powerful army and invaded Italy. But Maximian had fortified the cities and he could effect nothing. When therefore he had advanced within sixty miles of Rome he perceived the danger of his position and retreated with some precipitation. Maximian was in Gaul and Maxentius contented himself with hanging upon the rear of the retreating army. He avoided a general engagement.

As a last resource Galerius appealed to Diocletian. The old emperor consented to a conference, and promised to use his interest with Maximian. The conference was held at Carnuntum, Maximian and Galerius being present. At the 307,

conference Diocletian again persuaded Maximian to abdicate. It was decided that Licinius, a comrade of Galerius, should be made an emperor, and that Maxentius should be excluded from the succession. Seeing that Maximian and Maxentius were at the head of a victorious army, there was little chance of the arrangement being carried out.

After the conference Maximian visited Constantine in Gaul, confirmed the title of Augustus which he had probably already assumed, and gave him his step-daughter Fausta in marriage.

Meanwhile Maximinus, the nephew of Galerius, whom he had made a Cæsar, determined not to be behind the others in dignity, and assumed the purple. Thus there were at one time six men claiming the imperial title, besides Diocletian, who was in retirement: Maximian, Galerius, Constantine, Maxentius, Licinius and Maximinus.

Though Maximian, who was now an old man, had professed to abdicate he hungered after power, and was looked upon by the others as a somewhat dangerous character. His son Maxentius, impatient of his interference, drove him from Rome. He retired to Illyricum, but Galerius drove him thence. He then took refuge in Gaul with Constantine his son-in-law. In Gaul he might have ended his days in peace, but during the absence of Constantine at the Rhine he somewhat too readily believed a rumour of his death, and attempted to seize the throne. Constantine returned quickly and chased him to Marseilles. He surrendered and was imprisoned for a
310. time, but exhausted Constantine's patience, and at length died in prison, probably by command.

One emperor had passed away, but five remained. Of these Galerius died in the following year. He had been a
311. hard man, and was the one chiefly responsible for the persecution of the Christians in Diocletian's reign. But he became afflicted at last by a grievous disease, and it softened him, for a few days before his death he revoked his edicts against the Christians and besought their prayers.

There were now four emperors: Constantine and Maxen-

tius dividing the western, Licinius and Maximinus dividing the eastern portions of the empire.

Constantine and Maxentius were the first to fall out. The origin of the quarrel is disputed, but both emperors raised large armies and prepared for serious conflict. Constantine crossed the Alps, and the first battle was fought in the plains of Turin. Maxentius was heavily defeated, and fell back on Rome. Constantine again advanced, and a great battle was fought at Saxa Rubra. Maxentius was again defeated, and in 312.
the retreat was drowned.

The Romans received Constantine with gladness, and as usual heaped insults upon the memory of his unfortunate predecessor. Constantine slew the sons of Maxentius, but as regards the rest passed an act of oblivion. He also erected a triumphal arch which still stands.

There were now three emperors, Constantine, Licinius, and Maximinus. Constantine desired alliance with Licinius, and gave him his sister Constantia in marriage. Whilst the nuptials were being celebrated at Turin, word came that Maximinus had marched from Syria, and was invading the dominions of Licinius. Licinius hurried back and defeated him. Shortly afterwards he died at Tarsus. After his death 313.
Licinius barbarously slew his relatives, together with all whom he deemed inimical to himself. Amongst those who perished were Prisca, the wife of Diocletian, and Valeria his daughter, widow of Galerius. Prisca and Valeria were Christians and had suffered many things, both from Diocletian and Galerius. After the death of Galerius, Maximinus had tried to persuade Valeria to marry him, though he had a wife alive. She refused, so he drove her with her mother into exile. Their murder by Licinius was a piece of inexplicable barbarity. Diocletian was still alive, living in retirement at Salona. He died this same year, his last hours doubtless embittered by the cruelty of Licinius.

The Roman world was now divided between two emperors, Constantine and Licinius. They also fell out, and East and

314. West joined issue. The civil war was soon over. In two battles, at Cibalis in Pannonia, and at Mardia in Thrace, Constantine gained decisive victories, and Licinius sued for peace. Constantine granted peace, but curtailed his dominions, leaving him only Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt.

Constantine had now to turn his attention to the northern tribes. He spent several years warring against them, conquered Sarmatia, and made a treaty with the Goths by which they undertook to furnish him with 40,000 recruits to the Roman armies.

323. The reconciliation between the emperors lasted for eight years, after which war broke out again. Licinius concentrated his forces at Adrianople, Constantine mobilised at Thessalonica. Then Constantine advanced, defeated Licinius, and drove him out of Europe into Asia. Licinius gathered another army in Bithynia, and Constantine, crossing the Bosphorus, defeated him at Scutari. Licinius then yielded, on the understanding that his life should be spared. He was sent to Thessalonica, but an excuse was soon found for his execution.

The Roman Empire was now reunited, and Diocletian's scheme had in great measure fallen to the ground. He had divided the imperial authority amongst colleagues, subject to the general control of the senior emperor. So long as his powerful hand guided all, the arrangement answered, but no sooner had he abdicated than trouble began. Twenty years of conflict followed, and now the failure of the plan was apparent. When, after some years the empire was again divided, the idea of a single central authority was absent.

We have spoken of the persecution of Christians under Diocletian. Shortly after his abdication persecution ceased in
307. the western provinces, but Galerius and Maximinus still carried on a reign of terror in the East. Most of those who are celebrated as Diocletian martyrs suffered between 308 and 311 A.D. that is, after the abdication of the emperor.

311. At length Galerius himself gave up the struggle and issued an edict of toleration. In this edict he reproached the Chris-

tians with forsaking the gods of their fathers, and explained how the emperors had tried to bring them back to the true faith. He acknowledged that their efforts had been in vain, and declared that so long as the Christians did nothing contrary to the good order of the Roman State they might hold their assemblies unmolested, and live quietly in their own homes. Shortly after issuing this edict, Galerius died.

The deliverance of the Christians filled them with joy. From prison and exile they flocked homeward singing hymns of thanksgiving. Maximinus continued to harass them, but from this they were soon delivered by his death. In the previous year Maxentius had been defeated and slain so that Constantine and Licinius divided the empire between them. Then came the defeat and death of Licinius, and Constantine ruled alone.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

CONSTANTINUS I. was the eldest son of the Emperor Constantius Chlorus and his wife Helena. He was born 274 A.D. at Naissus in Mœsia. His father was one of the two Cæsars appointed by Diocletian and Maximian in 292, and received the government of Britain, Gaul and Spain, with Trèves as his residence. At the same time he divorced his wife Helena and married Theodora, the step-daughter of Maximian.

Helena, therefore, remained in the East whilst her former husband was reigning at Trèves. Constantine also remained in the East. He did not seriously quarrel with his father about the divorce, for his father acted under irresistible influence, but there was an estrangement. Constantine was deeply attached to his mother, and the unkindness to which she was subjected drew them together. When Constantine became emperor in after years he promoted his mother to high honour, giving her the rank of Augusta. Helena was in her later years a devout Christian, but whether she became a Christian before or after her son's conversion is not certain. Her influence over him, however, was always for good.

Constantine was trained in the service of Diocletian and Galerius, and developed into a brave and capable man. When
305. Diocletian and Maximian abdicated and Galerius and Constantius became emperors, the nomination of the new Cæsars fell into the hands of Galerius. Constantine was passed over, and seeing that there was no future for him with Galerius, and that his life was barely safe he escaped to Gaul. He found his father sailing for Britain on an expedition against

the Picts and joined him. That same year his father, who had been ailing for some time, died at York. 306.

Constantine now laid claim to a share in the empire and the legions enthusiastically supported him. Galerius dared not contest the matter so he acknowledged Constantine as his father's successor but with the title of Cæsar only. That same year as we have seen Maximian and Maxentius seized the imperial power at Rome, and held Italy against both Severus and Galerius. A conference with Diocletian followed of which the only practical issue was the appointment of 307. another emperor, Licinius, a comrade of Galerius.

Five years after these events, when Galerius from his 311. death-bed issued the edict of toleration of which we have already spoken, Constantine and Licinius both signed it.

The incidents accompanying the death of the old emperor Maximian have already been recorded. After his death Constantine fell out with Maxentius, his brother-in-law, and invaded Italy. He defeated him at Turin, and again at Saxa Rubra, and in the latter battle Maxentius was slain. 312.

A picturesque account is given of a vision which Constantine is said to have had on his march against Maxentius. Perplexed in his mind he is said to have seen a luminous cross in the sky with the words "By this conquer," and this vision is said to have decided him to become a Christian. If we hesitate to believe the narrative it is not because we doubt the possibility of a vision but because we do not think the Redeemer of mankind would have encouraged war at all, by vision or otherwise. Probably Constantine passed through a time of anxiety on the march and spoke to his friends about it. The rest would soon be added. Lactantius, a contemporary historian, says: "Constantine was told in a dream to cause the heavenly sign of God to be placed on the shields, and thus to proceed to battle. He did as he was commanded." This puts the matter in a reasonable light.

The year following Licinius visited Constantine in Milan 313. and married his sister Constantia. During this visit the fa-

mous edict of Milan went forth. It emanated from Constantine, but Licinius concurred.

The edict of Milan proclaimed full religious toleration, alleging the sacred rights of conscience as its motive. It gave no ascendency to Christianity, but declared liberty of worship to Pagan, Jew and Christian alike.

The edict ordained that the civil and religious rights of which the Christians had been deprived should be restored; that the places of worship and lands which had been confiscated should be given back; and that every man should have the right to follow the religion which he preferred.

Strict obedience to the terms of the edict was enjoined upon governors of provinces, and the emperors gratefully acknowledging the Divine favour, declared that they were only actuated by a desire to propitiate the Deity and consult the happiness of their people.

Great part of the charm of this edict lay in its non-dogmatic form. When Constantine in after years avowed himself the patron of Christianity he published edicts specially in its favour. The edict of Milan was not of that type. It did not patronise Christianity nor condemn any other faith. It simply acknowledged that the civil power should not step between man and God. Every one might worship the Deity as his conscience dictated, and no one was to be under civil disability on account of his religious views. This was the true Christian spirit, the spirit of Him who said: "My kingdom is not of this world". So far as we are aware Constantine was the first civil ruler to boldly affirm this principle, and though he afterwards departed from it and many centuries were to pass before the principle would be accepted, if indeed it is yet accepted, Constantine deserves credit for its annunciation. Whether Constantine truly understood all that Christianity implied at this time we may doubt. But we do not doubt that the edict of Milan was inspired.

During the years that followed this edict Constantine's laws had a distinctly religious tone. He discouraged, though

he could not entirely prevent, gladiatorial shows; abolished the punishment of crucifixion, and on some occasions refused to take part in pagan rites. He retained, however, the office of Pontifex Maximus, and took part in heathen ceremonies when they came in the form of imperial functions. He promoted the emancipation of slaves, enacting that they might be freed in church as well as before the magistrate. He even issued an edict concerning the observance of Sunday, but this was probably on general rather than on Christian grounds. That the edict might not offend his pagan subjects he styled the Lord's day *dies solis* (Sunday). Necessary operations of agriculture were made an exception. Constantine issued a form of prayer to the Supreme Being for the use of the army, wisely making it of such a nature that it could be used by men of every religion.

The prayer was as follows:—

"We acknowledge Thee to be the only God: we own Thee as our King: we entreat Thine aid. Through Thee we have won our victories: through Thee we vanquish our foes. We give Thee thanks for all our present benefits, and trust in Thee for favours yet to come. We are all Thy suppliants: we beseech Thee to preserve to us in length of life, in safety and in triumph, our Emperor Constantine and his royal house" (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, bk. iv., chap. xx.).

Unfortunately Constantine did not confine himself to the removal of the disabilities under which Christians suffered, but went on to distinguish the Christian Church by special marks of royal favour. He endowed churches from public funds or from revenues derived from the confiscation of heathen temples, made gifts of public money to the clergy, and endeavoured to relieve them from taxation.

Constantine further permitted the bishops to usurp the jurisdiction of the civil courts, allowed the clergy to receive deathbed gifts and to hold lands. This policy, well meant but most unwise, has brought confusion into many States, and, even in his own reign, Constantine perceived that he had made

a mistake. Unworthy men received ordination merely in order that they might enjoy the privileges and immunities of ecclesiastics, and great masses of property fell into the hands of the Church. It was said that had Constantine presented the Churches with two entire provinces they would not have gained more than they did under his legislation.

313. Constantine's first personal interference with matters of ecclesiastical jurisdiction was in connection with a dispute in the Numidian province. There was a controversy there concerning Church discipline, between the Donatists and those whom we may for convenience call the Catholics. The Donatists strongly advocated a pure Church, and refused to recognise many professing Christians as members of the Church of Christ at all.

The Donatists, persecuted by Cæcilian their bishop, made the mistake of invoking the aid of Constantine. Their petition to the emperor closed as follows:—

"We address ourselves to thee, most excellent prince, because thou art of righteous parentage, and the son of a father who did not persecute us, as did his colleagues, the other emperors. Since, therefore, the regions of Gaul have not fallen into the sin of surrendering the Scriptures, and since there are disputes between us and other prelates of Africa, we supplicate thy piety, that our case may be submitted to judges drawn from Gaul" (Cooper's *Free Church*, pp. 365, 366).

This is the first important instance in which Christians asked the aid of the State in settlement of their religious affairs. It was an unfortunate precedent.

At one time Constantine's own views on the matter were clear enough. In a letter to the Council of Arles he says:—

"They demand my judgment who myself expect the judgment of Christ. . . . O what audacity of madness! After the manner of the heathen they appeal to me." (*Dict. Christ. Biog.*, i., p. 640).

Nevertheless Constantine was induced to accept the position of arbiter, and after a time came to believe that the duty

of settling disputes in the Church belonged to him. It was the easier for him to glide into this position because, as he himself put it, the heathen already appealed to him. As Pontifex Maximus he was supreme judge in their religious matters.

In response to the request of the Donatists a synod was 313.
held at Rome in the palace of the Lateran. The decision was against the Donatists. Next year there was a further hearing at Arles, the parties and judges being brought there at public 314.
expense. There were 200 bishops present, and the decision of the previous council was confirmed. The Donatists then entreated the emperor to take the matter into his own hands. He did so, and the case was argued before him at Milan with 316.
the same result.

Irritated at the obstinacy of the Donatists in declining even yet to accept their defeat, Constantine now enforced the decision of the councils by the aid of the secular arm. The Donatists were proscribed, deprived of their churches, their property was confiscated, their bishops were exiled. When they still remained refractory Constantine sent an army, and for the first time in the world's history Christians slaughtered Christians. Fire and sword swept over the country. Such were the first-fruits of the alliance between Church and State.

At length Constantine perceived that schism could not thus 317.
be conquered, and ordered his soldiers to stay their hand. At the same time he advised Cæcilian to treat his opponents kindly, and leave vengeance to God. It must, however, in fairness be said that a contemporary historian declares that the harsh treatment of the Donatists was against the wishes of the Catholic bishops. At all events Constantine interfered no more with the Donatists, and they so increased that in A.D. 330 their synod was attended by 270 bishops.

We have seen in the last chapter how Constantine and Licinius went to war in 314, and how Licinius was defeated. After his defeat he seems to have again become the champion of paganism. The struggle between the emperors was renewed

323. some years later, and resulted in the defeat and death of Licinius. Constantine was at last master in an undivided empire.

Constantine now became openly the patron of the Christian Church. He did not suppress heathen worship by force, though he prohibited rites involving immorality or sorcery. Moreover, in Byzantium, to which he removed the seat of his government, he only allowed Christian worship. But offices and other rewards were given to Christians, and it was soon seen on which side favour lay. The inevitable result followed. There were large additions to the Christian Church from the ranks of the heathen. Some were doubtless sincere, but many, we fear, were led by interest. Soon imperial favour was a greater danger to the Church than imperial hostility had been.

323. At the time when Constantine became sole emperor the Arian controversy was distracting the Christian Church. It had originated in a dispute between Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, and Arius, a presbyter. The dispute was concerning the true relationship of the Father and the Son. The contention of Arius logically involved the question of the divinity of Christ, though he would not allow that his views were unsound.

Constantine did not realise the gravity of the dispute, and wrote a letter to Alexander and Arius jointly, saying that they were disputing about an insignificant matter, and entreating them to suffer him to spend his days in peace.

But this well-meant letter did not settle the dispute, and Constantine determined to call a council. Accordingly he sum-
325. moned the famous council of Nicæa. To this council bishops came from all parts of the empire, each bishop being allowed a retinue of two presbyters and three slaves. Careful posting arrangements were made and all invited to the conference travelled and were entertained at the public expense. The most distinguished champion on the orthodox side was Athanasius, a young deacon of Alexandria.

Constantine presided over the council himself, and his

dignified and courteous bearing inspired high respect. The theologians attacked one another with acrimony and the council lasted for two months. An effort was made to attain the impossible by fixing upon a declaration of faith to which the whole Church would agree. After a keen dispute between the Arians and the orthodox, the latter triumphed and the Nicene creed was the result.

The Nicene creed as read in our churches is not the same as the original creed. In later years the creed was modified, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was more clearly set forth, and certain condemnatory clauses were omitted. The creed as it now stands is a distinct improvement on the original.

At first a goodly number refused to subscribe to the creed, but when they found that the penalty for non-compliance would be loss of place and of imperial favour most of them yielded. A few, among whom was Arius, held out.

The time for celebrating Easter was also settled by this council and those who refused to conform were declared excommunicate.

At the end of the council Constantine gave a banquet to the bishops and presented gifts. Then exhorting them to be of one mind, to live at peace, and to pray for himself, his children and the empire, he bade them farewell.

During the Nicæan Council Constantine displayed great moderation, but afterwards he was severe. Arius was banished and his writings were burned. Some of his supporters were also banished.

Persecution did not end with the Arians. Constantine was persuaded to pass a penal law against various kinds of dissenters, forbidding them to meet in churches or private houses, and ordering that their houses of prayer, "if they deserved to be called so," should be pulled down and confiscated to the Catholic Church. Thus, no sooner was the Church free from the persecution of idolaters than Christians began to persecute one another, the direct result of the patronage of the Church

by the emperor, and the invoking by the Christians themselves of the aid of the secular power.

The irony of the situation appeared when a little time afterwards Constantine modified his views and favoured the Arians. He restored their bishops, recalled Arius and ordered that he should be received back into the Church. But this was not so easily arranged. Athanasius, now head of the orthodox party in Alexandria, refused to take him back even when threatened with deposition and banishment. Constantine respected his firmness and forbore to proceed to extremities. He declared that whatever the views of Athanasius might be, he was a man of God.

The enemies of Athanasius persisted in attacking him and Constantine was at last obliged to agree to his trial. It was the thirtieth year of Constantine's reign, and he had invited many bishops to the dedication of a church which he had erected over the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The emperor ordered them first to meet at Tyre to consider the case of Athanasius, but that prelate begged for a change of venue to Constantinople. The request was granted and he was ultimately exiled to the important and comfortable city of Trèves.

Arius now returned to Alexandria, but the Christians there would not receive him. He therefore returned to Constantinople, and Constantine ordered that he should be installed in the church there. But the bishop refused to open the church doors and the friends of Arius were talking of making a forcible entry when Arius suddenly died. He was over eighty
336. years of age and probably the prolonged excitement proved too much for his strength.

The building of Constantinople was the great event of this reign. Born in Servia, bred in Asia, and crowned in Britain, Rome was to Constantine a foreign city. The enemies of the empire lay in the East and North-east, and Rome was an inconvenient residence for an emperor who desired to watch the Danubian and Asiatic frontiers. Diocletian had lived at Nicomedia, a city on the Asiatic side of the Sea of Marmora, and

Constantine had his usual residence there. But struck with the superior suitability of Byzantium he determined to build a new capital on its site.

Byzantium had been founded by the Greeks nine centuries before and had already passed through many vicissitudes. The new capital covered a much larger space. Constantine took a personal interest in the work, superintending the laying out of the walls and the building of the city. He spent vast sums in public buildings and decoration, and despoiled other cities of their treasures for its sake. When the city was ready for habitation he removed to it the seat of government, and invited persons of wealth and influence to take up their abode there. The city was called New Rome at the first, but the name Constantinopolis was more appropriate and has endured.

It is as a rule a dangerous experiment to start a new city, but in this case the experiment was absolutely successful. The position was ideal, and notwithstanding very rough treatment and temporary destruction at times the city still endures.

The building of Constantinople, which was perhaps the logical outcome of the scheme of Diocletian, helped to still further depose Rome from her imperial position, and paved the way for the final separation of East and West. This separation was not part of Constantine's plan, but it was coming, and the provision of a suitable capital on the Bosphorus helped it forward.

In the year 326 Constantine went to Rome to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of his reign, and the festival was blighted by a sore tragedy. His eldest son Crispus was apprehended during the festival, exiled to Istria and executed. Some of his comrades were executed at the same time. It is possible that Constantine acted too hurriedly, and it is even said that he afterwards erected a monument to Crispus with the words: "To my son whom I unjustly condemned". But the whole matter is obscure.

During the latter part of Constantine's reign there were wars between the Sarmatians dwelling in Upper Hungary and

the Goths. Constantine went to the aid of the Sarmatians
332. and defeated the Goths. But when the war was renewed the Sarmatians, unable to withstand the pressure, entreated Constantine to permit them to settle in the empire. Accordingly
334. he gave them lands in Illyricum and Italy and 300,000 of them emigrated at this time.

Three years later Sapor II. began hostilities on the Persian frontier. Constantine prepared to march against him, but fell ill at Nicomedia. Realising that his illness was mortal he desired to be baptised. Calling the bishops together in his palace he said that it had been his desire to receive baptism in the Jordan, but God had ordained otherwise. His purple robes having been removed the ceremony was performed, after which he was clothed in white and laid upon his bed. He died in the
337. sixty-fourth year of his age and the thirty-first of his reign. His body was taken to Constantinople where it lay in state for a time. It was then buried with great pomp in a tomb prepared by himself and in the Church of the Apostles which he had built. The site is now occupied by a mosque. He is said to have been mourned with wonderful lamentation, and he deserved to be for he was a good man and a great king.

The Christian Church, grateful for many favours, canonised Constantine, as well as his mother the Empress Helena. At Rome he was enrolled among the gods and incense was offered before his statue.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE HOUSE OF CONSTANTINE.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT left three sons, Constantinus, aged 337.
twenty-one; Constantius, aged twenty; and Constans, aged seventeen. He left instructions that after his death his dominions should be divided between the three sons and two nephews. But Constantius, his second son, who was on the spot, secured the empire to his brothers and himself by a wholesale massacre of his relations. Only two children, Gallus and Julian, were spared, probably because too young to be considered dangerous. Though Constantius receives most of the blame for this massacre, it was probably rather the work of the ministers and troops than of the prince himself. The empire was now divided between the brothers, Constantine II. obtaining Britain, Gaul and Spain; Constans having Italy, and Constantius ruling the East.

This settlement did not give satisfaction. Constantine II., the eldest brother, quarrelled with Constans and attacked him, expecting an easy victory. But the young prince was well served by his generals, and Constantine was led into an ambuscade at Aquileia and slain. Thus Gaul, Britain and Spain 340.
passed to Constans, who now ruled two-thirds of the empire, the remainder being ruled by Constantius.

When Constantine the Great died the empire was on the eve of a Persian war, and Constantius, falling heir to the East, fell heir to this also. Sapor II. took advantage of the death of Constantine the Great and invaded Mesopotamia. He made rapid progress, winning battles and capturing cities, but in the midst of his success he was threatened by a barbarian invasion, and was glad to make a truce with Constantius, who, for

reasons which shall shortly appear, was equally glad of the respite.

During the years that followed his succession to the dominions of his elder brother, Constans saw much fighting in Gaul. As he was young and more fond of pleasure than war, active operations were left in the hands of his generals. The ablest of these was Magnentius, a German, who had risen from the ranks, and was in command of the picked regiments. Magnentius conspired against Constans and was proclaimed emperor by his men. Constans taken at a disadvantage fled, but was overtaken and slain. When the news of the murder of their lawful emperor reached the Illyrian regiments they also determined to elect an emperor, and induced Vetranio to assume the purple. Vetranio was loyal to the house of Constantine, but accepted the position rather than see another proclaimed.

350. Constantius was warring on the Persian frontier when he heard of these events, so he arranged the truce with Sapor already mentioned, and turned westward to meet the usurpers. Vetranio gladly resigned his power into the emperor's hands, so that he was left with only Magnentius to face. After being
353. defeated in two campaigns Magnentius put an end to his life, and the Roman Empire was again united under one ruler.

That his hands might be free for dealing with Magnentius, Constantius had given Gallus, one of the boys spared at the massacre, the title of Cæsar, and had left him in command of the East. Gallus is said to have ruled badly, and certainly he made many enemies. Constantius ordered him to appear before him at Milan to answer for himself, and he set out, but on the way was arrested, imprisoned and executed.

354. Thus of the house of Constantine the Great only Constantius, a son, and Julian, a nephew, brother of Gallus, now survived. Julian was born at Constantinople, 331 A.D., so that he was six years of age when his uncle died. He had been educated with care, but watched with jealousy. After the execution of Gallus, Julian complained because his brother had

been condemned without a trial, and for a time his own life was in danger. For some months he was kept under strict surveillance, but he at length managed to pacify the emperor, and was allowed to proceed to Athens. After a few months in that city he had the title of Cæsar conferred on him, and was sent to active service in Gaul. The German tribes had crossed the Rhine and were ravaging the province, and Julian was entrusted with the task of driving them back. He showed much ability, defeated them in four campaigns, and carried the war across the Rhine into their own country. He also governed the province well, and gained goodwill on every side.

Constantius had been equally successful on the Danubian frontier, but from this he was called to Mesopotamia to meet a fresh invasion of Sapor, the Persian king. That he might do this the more effectively he requested Julian to send him four legions from Gaul. Doubtless he wanted the men, partly also perhaps he dreaded the progress Julian was making in popular favour, and desired to weaken his hands. Julian suspected that the latter was the chief reason, and his troops shared his opinion and refused to march. They were in Paris at the 360.
time, and there they proclaimed Julian emperor. Julian accepted the position with some reluctance. He did not wish to break with Constantius, so he wrote to him explaining the circumstances, signing himself by the lower title of Cæsar, and asking Constantius to confirm the higher title. But Constantius was furious, and both men prepared for war. Julian hastened southward with his forces, marching from the Rhine to Illyricum. Constantius marched westward from Syria, but near Tarsus, in Cilicia, he fell sick and died. He was but forty-five years of age, and had reigned for twenty-five years. 361.
Thus civil war was averted; Julian had now no opponent, and when he reached Constantinople the whole city came out to greet him. He was in the thirty-second year of his age when he thus obtained undisputed possession of the empire.

JULIAN.—Julian has been unfairly treated by historians in being branded with a surname which prejudges his character.

The emperor was a sincere idolater, and wrote philosophical works in favour of the ancient faith. There was nothing extraordinary in this, for notwithstanding the conversion of Constantine the Great and his long patronage of Christianity, more than half the population of the empire still held to idol worship. Julian had been educated in Christian doctrine, but had never been a Christian at heart, and should not be spoken of as an "apostate". There had been, moreover, little in his experience calculated to incline him towards Christianity. His uncle Constantine the Great was a good man, but he had scarcely known him. He was but six when the great emperor died. The three "Christian" emperors who succeeded Constantine began their career by foully murdering his relatives. Until Julian was twenty years of age he was practically a prisoner, and his life until he became Cæsar was never safe. Nor was Julian likely to be favourably impressed by such fruits of Christianity as he saw around him. The palace in the days of Constantine the Great had been respectable, but it was now grossly licentious. With the poorer Christians, amongst whom such true religion as there was mostly dwelt, he would be little in touch. The ecclesiastics with whom Julian came into contact spent their lives in intrigue and in senseless and acrimonious disputes upon obscure questions in theology, leaving the corruption and misery of the empire unalleviated and unreproved. Christianity had been the established religion of the empire for forty years, and this was the outcome. Can we wonder if there was a reaction, and if men of philosophic mind like Julian began to wonder whether Christianity was any improvement upon the ancient faith?

As soon as Julian became emperor he avowed himself an idol worshipper. He did not persecute Christians, but published an edict of universal toleration. He desired to be impartial, but we can well understand how difficult was the position which he occupied. The Christian Church had been favoured by Constantine above all other religious bodies, and his unworthy sons had in this respect followed in their father's

footsteps. Christians had been preferred in making public appointments, temples had been destroyed or allowed to fall into decay, idol worship had been forbidden in certain parts of the empire, and revenues devoted originally to the temples had been confiscated for the benefit of Christianity. To reverse this policy even in part was a most difficult matter. When one religious body has enjoyed pre-eminence over the rest, and has monopolised the good things of the State for a long time, any attempt to touch its peculiar privileges by placing it on an equality with other religious bodies is looked upon as persecution. Yet it was inevitable that Julian should put idolaters into office, and should order the restoration of ruined temples and confiscated revenues.

Doubtless there was active persecution during the reign of Julian, though against the will of the emperor and without his knowledge. The idol worshippers, though a majority of the people, had been roughly thrust aside; they had old scores to pay back, and priests, governors and officials, especially in the country districts, flushed with victory, would find their opportunity to oppress. Nor can Julian be entirely freed from blame. He issued an order forbidding Christians to teach the classics or the writings of the heathen philosophers. His reason was logical enough. Seeing that Christians did not believe in the gods, he thought they should not intermeddle with heathen philosophy.

Julian was a most active legislator. Though he reigned for but twenty months, fifty-four of his laws appear in the codes of Theodosius and Justinian.

The emperor waged war against the many abuses which had grown up in the court of Constantius, particularly against the pernicious influence of the eunuchs, strange residents to find in a Christian court. He was himself a good man, living an unselfish and virtuous life. Had he been spared he would have had an excellent influence in many ways, and his sincerity might have led him to embrace Christianity in the end. But his reign was so short that neither the attempted restoration of

idolatry nor his war against corruption had much permanent effect.

When Julian succeeded to the throne Alexandria was in a turmoil. One George of Cappadocia, a defaulting army contractor, had taken to theology and embraced Arian doctrine. He was clever and zealous, and was appointed eventually to the see of Alexandria, notwithstanding much popular protest. He used his power corruptly, and when Julian came to the throne he deposed and imprisoned him. After twenty-four days the people, impatient of judicial delay, broke open the prison and lynched their enemy. But in slaying the man they created the martyr, for his crimes were forgotten and the Arians held his memory in reverence. Accordingly, when the crusaders entered the East in 1097 they found George canonised and honoured as a warrior saint. At the siege of Antioch in 1098 this saint was thought to have helped them, and he was adopted as one of their patrons. About 1350 Edward III. associated him with the Order of the Garter, and he became the St. George of Merry England.

Though he had no sympathy with their religious ideas, Julian patronised the Jews, and even encouraged a scheme for rebuilding Jerusalem and planting there a Jewish colony. The scheme was supported by wealthy Hebrews and a great deal of money was subscribed. Contemporary writers declare that the work was stopped by supernatural manifestations, but their statements may be disregarded. The death of Julian and the succession of a Christian emperor put an end to the plan.

The beginning of Julian's reign had been associated with the Persian war, and it was fated that the end of his reign should have a similar association. In the hope of recovering some of the territory which the empire had lost, the emperor
363. gathered a great army at Antioch and set out, moving down the Euphrates Valley. He had brilliant success until he reached Ctesiphon. Here he defeated the Persian army, but as the city was powerfully fortified and surrounded by water and

morass he did not besiege it, but marched inland, hoping to force the Persians to give him battle in the open plain.

Julian had been attended by a great fleet which had sailed down the Tigris, but this he burned together with his magazine and stores, hoping to find sufficient support for the troops in the surrounding country. The Persians, however, adopted Fabian tactics. They refused to give battle but hovered round, cutting off stragglers and attacking parties of soldiers whenever they safely could. Meanwhile they drove away their cattle and devastated the country, so that Julian could not obtain provision for his troops. The soldiers were soon in great straits, and many sickened and died. At last retreat became inevitable. Whilst retiring they were attacked by the whole force of the Persian army, but notwithstanding the distressing circumstances the soldiers fought well and the assaults of the enemy were repulsed again and again.

Julian showed unflinching courage on the retreat, but his utmost efforts could do no more than save the troops from annihilation. At length in repulsing a serious attack he was shot through the liver and fell senseless to the ground. When he recovered consciousness he wished to renew the struggle, but the surgeons told him that his wound was mortal. He then retired and spent the few remaining hours of his life in conversation with his friends.

Julian was only in the thirty-second year of his age when he died, and his reign had lasted less than two years. Yet he had shown great qualities, and had he lived longer he might have proved worthy to be reckoned among the great Roman Emperors. Both as crown prince and emperor he had toiled hard for the good of the State, he was upright in his administration, and he lived a life of virtue and of self-control.

There is a legend that when on his deathbed Julian uttered the words, "Oh, Galilean, thou hast conquered!" Though the narrative is without foundation, yet it would be correct to say that Julian's effort on behalf of paganism made no enduring

impression. He was succeeded by Christian emperors, and that which he had done was undone.

Julian was a man of scholarly attainment and an author of merit. Many of his works are still extant. One was against the Christians. The work is lost, but extracts are given in writings of the Fathers who replied to it.

Julian left no son, and the race of Constantine died with him.

CHAPTER XXX.

JOVIAN, VALENTINIAN I., VALENS, GRATIAN.

JOVIAN.—When Julian fell, the army which he had led against the Persians was in a position of extreme peril. It was essential that a successor should be at once appointed. Hurriedly and almost by accident Jovianus, the head of the imperial household, was chosen, and to him fell the task of rescuing the army from the peril by which it was surrounded. The task was rendered the harder from the fact that the death of Julian greatly encouraged the Persians. They attacked the Roman forces with renewed vigour and though they were repulsed it was with difficulty and by desperate fighting. 363.

Clearly there was no alternative for the Romans but to make peace if they would save the remnant of their army. Jovian accordingly entered into negotiation with Sapor and conditions of peace were laid down. They were very hard. Five provinces on the Tigris were restored to the Persian monarchy: the impregnable city of Nisbis and other fortresses were handed over: the suzerainty of Armenia which had cost so many wars was abandoned. Hard though the terms were they were agreed to, a truce of thirty years was arranged, and hostages were given on both sides. The Romans now marched homeward, but they were almost without provisions and it was not until they had journeyed for a week and suffered terrible hardship that they reached the city of Ur and found adequate supply. Jovian sent messengers all over the empire announcing his accession and the peace he had concluded with Persia, and the election was accepted on the whole with tranquillity. The remains of Julian were interred at Tarsus, which he had se-

lected as his burial place because his mother's family resided there.

On the homeward journey, at a small town on the frontiers of Bithynia and Galatia, after a reign of little more than seven months, Jovian suddenly died and "the throne of the world was again vacant".

364. VALENTINIAN I.—The election of Jovian had been hurried, the election of Valentinian was deliberate. An assembly of chiefs both civil and military was held at Nicæa, and he was selected. He was absent at the time, and his formal installation took place ten days later.

Valentinian I. was an Illyrian of humble origin but commanding presence. He was a professing Christian of the orthodox sort, and had held important military appointments.

When in the act of haranguing the army a cry arose that Valentinian should at once elect a colleague. He asked time to consider, and then elected his brother Valens as joint emperor. Valens was a commonplace man, greatly inferior to his brother, but he was unswervingly loyal to him and as a subordinate emperor did well enough.

In dividing the empire Valentinian took the West, Gaul, Italy, Illyricum, with Milan as his capital. Valens took the East, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, with Constantinople as his capital. For a time, Sallust, a liberal-minded man, acted as prefect and chief adviser to Valens, but he was thrust aside in favour of Probus, Valens' father-in-law, who governed with much severity.

The empire was now menaced on every side by barbarian tribes. In Britain the Picts, the Scots and the Saxons gave the quieter people of the Roman province much anxiety: on the Upper Rhine the Alemanni frequently crossed the river and ravaged Gaul, the Sarmatians and Quadi roamed over Pannonia, and the Goths overran Thrace.

The tribes dwelling on the shores of the Baltic and North Sea were giving ever increasing trouble. They were capital seamen and splendid fighters, and united the trades of fishing

and buccaneering with considerable skill. They used simple vessels, made partly of skins, and so light that they could be carried across country on carts. They had made a settlement for themselves in the north of Gaul, and were united in a loose military confederation for rapine and defence.

To contend with the buccaneers the Romans had an official known as the Count of the Saxon Shore, and Valentinian entrusted the conquest of the tribes in Northern Britain to Theodosius, father of the future emperor of that name. Theodosius drove the tribes to the north and recovered the territory between the walls of Hadrian and Antoninus, which they had 367.
overrun. The territory thus recovered became the province of Valentia.

Some years later Theodosius was employed in Africa, where a serious revolt had arisen under a usurper named Firmus. 374.
Here also Theodosius was successful. Next year Valentinian died, and the year after, lamentable to relate, Theodosius was beheaded at Carthage by order of Valens. His only crime was that his name began with the letters Theod, and a soothsayer had declared that Valens would be succeeded by someone whose name began thus.

Valentinian was a strong and upright man, but exceedingly 367.
cruel at times. He associated his son Gratian with him in the empire whilst he was still a boy. He had hard work to defend the frontiers of the Rhine and Upper Danube from the incursions of the Alemanni and the Franks, peoples from whom the names of Allemagne and France have sprung. In order better to defend the frontiers, Valentinian built many fortresses. These were efficacious for a time, but at a later period became centres of rebellion and did more harm than good.

In religious matters Valentinian showed much toleration. Julian's anti-Christian legislation was repealed, and it was clearly understood that the empire was to be Christian, but Valentinian announced that every man might freely practise "that form of worship which he had imbibed with his soul". Those who were supposed to practise divination and witchcraft

were, however, mercilessly persecuted both by Valentinian and Valens, and such was the prevailing ignorance that the crusade against witchcraft practically resolved itself into a crusade against science. During this superstitious spasm many good men suffered unjustly, and many books of mathematical and scientific value were destroyed. Opportunities are afforded at times like these for the gratification of private malevolence, there were many prosecutions upon false information, and cruel deeds were done.

Notwithstanding many faults Valentinian's reign was distinguished by wise and tolerant legislation, amongst other laws passed were statutes prohibiting the exposure of infants, appointing public physicians, and restraining ecclesiastics from acquiring property by undue influence.

The wise concessions of territory made by certain far-seeing emperors had given peace on the Danube frontier for nearly a century. The Goths had formed a confederacy and had powerful leaders, of whom Hermanric, the Ostrogoth, is not yet forgotten. They helped the Romans against their enemies, many Gothic auxilliaries serving in the Persian campaigns. Unfortunately quarrels arose. The Quadi, a tribe of Sclavonic origin, were greatly aggrieved because Valentinian, in pursuance of his usual frontier policy, built a fortress on their side of the Danube, and some violent spirits amongst them crossed the river and ravaged Pannonia. Valentinian, full of wrath, attacked them with a powerful army, and the Quadi sent an embassy to explain how the trouble had arisen and to beg for peace. The ambassadors found Valentinian at Bregetio on the Danube. He received them in great pomp, but in the midst of
375. an impassioned speech was struck with apoplexy and died. He was fifty-four years of age, and had reigned for twelve years. His remains were carried to Constantinople and buried in the Church of the Apostles.

When Valentinian I. died his son Gratian, a boy of sixteen, who had been associated with him in the empire, was at Trier. Valens was at Antioch, and there was a fear that an emperor

might be chosen who was not a member of the reigning house. It happened, however, that Justina, the second wife of Valentinian, was in the camp. She had an infant son, and her friends hurriedly proclaimed him as monarch. When Gratian heard what had been done he approved and accepted his infant half-brother as partner. He reserved Britain, Gaul and Spain as his special dominion, and gave Italy, Africa and Illyricum to Justina to rule for Valentinian II. Valens kept the East.

The reign of Valens in the East had not been so successful as that of Valentinian in the West. Early in his reign he had been confronted with an insurrection led by Procopius, a Cilician, and relative of Julian, the former emperor. Procopius incurred the suspicions of both Jovian and Valens, and lay in concealment for two years. Tiring of an outcast life and taking advantage of some dissatisfaction amongst the soldiers, Procopius got a following and was proclaimed emperor in Constantinople.

The tidings of this revolt reached Valens and Valentinian 365.
speedily. Valentinian was too much occupied in Gaul to permit of his giving active assistance, and the burden of the contest fell upon Valens. At first he was greatly alarmed, and even spoke of resigning the purple, but braver counsels prevailed, and he marched to meet his rival.

The struggle between Valens and Procopius extended over portions of the years 365-6. For a time Procopius was successful, but the older men and the more staid amongst the soldiers and people held with Valens, and at last many of Procopius' followers deserted his banner. He was then somewhat easily defeated, captured and executed. 366.

The insurrection of Procopius brought the empire into collision with the Gothic tribes living north of the Danube. Ten thousand Gothic auxiliaries had crossed with the intention of helping Procopius. They arrived too late to be of service, and they were captured by Valens and detained in captivity. Their prince remonstrated, declaring that they had acted under the impression that Procopius was the nearest representative of

the family of Constantine and the lawful emperor; if they had committed an error of judgment, he begged that they might be forgiven.

Valens, however, determined to be avenged upon the Goths,
367. and the Roman legions crossed the Danube. The war extended over three years, at the end of which time peace was granted to the Goths. They were forbidden to cross the Danube, and two places only were assigned to them as market towns in which they might carry on their trade with the empire. The treaty
369. was ratified by Valens and Athanaric, who met on a merchant ship which had been moored in the middle of the Danube. Circumstances were, however, soon to arise which would make the fulfilment of the treaty impossible.

Whilst these events were transpiring in Europe, events were also transpiring in Asia which were destined to bring about many changes in the Roman Empire. In this great continent there had been upheavals from time immemorial, and these were again becoming serious. The Huns, a vast Tartar horde, impelled by some unknown force, appeared on the frontiers of the territory inhabited by the Gothic tribes, and pressed forward into their domains. The Tartar faces of the invaders, their ferocity, their squalor, filled the Goths with alarm. The
372. Alani of the Don were easily subdued, and then with a sudden rush the fertile districts under the sway of Hermanric, king of the Ostrogoths, were overrun. Hermanric escaped from the
375. ruin of his empire by suicide, and the Huns, having destroyed the Ostrogothic Empire, pressed on against Athanaric and the Visigoths.

376. Athanaric was defeated and driven from the Dneister back to the Pruth. The Huns then seem to have paused, but the Goths, stupefied and panic-stricken by their onslaught, came to the conclusion that there could be no safety for their people until they had put the broad Danube between them and their enemies.

The prince of the Visigoths whose territories lay nearest the Danube was Fritigern, a Christian, and he undertook to

negotiate with Valens and obtain permission for his people to cross and dwell on the southern side of the river. The negotiations were carried on by Ulfilas, a famous missionary bishop, and permission was at last granted. Had Valens been a far-seeing man he might, by exercising a wise and kindly policy, have turned the Visigoths at this crisis into an iron rampart which would have preserved the empire from much future trouble. Unfortunately no wisdom was shown and the results to the empire were most disastrous.

The Goths were permitted to enter the empire but on condition that they handed over their weapons, and gave up their children as hostages to be distributed throughout the empire. These conditions destroyed the grace of the concession and should never have been laid down. The Goths crossed in vast numbers, the children of the wealthier classes were torn from them, and in too many cases were prostituted to Roman lust. No arrangement was made for feeding the multitude. All was left to chance, and the Goths must either starve or buy provisions at a rate which soon reduced them to beggary. Slaves, money, household goods were parted with, and many sold their children into slavery rather than see them perish.

For some months the Visigoths endured all things rather than break their promise. But news of the treatment they were receiving reached the Ostrogoths, and they drew near to the Danube. Valens had refused permission to them to cross; it was well for them, and ill for him. They were under no obligation; they had made no promise. At last they made a dash across the Danube and invaded Moesia. Fritigern would fain have joined them but for his promise. At length his scruples were removed by the Roman general himself. Foreseeing trouble, he invited Fritigern to a banquet and attempted his assassination. Breaking out from the banqueting hall, sword in hand, Fritigern put himself at the head of his people. In their first encounter with the legions they slew so many that there was no lack of arms. "That day," says Jordanes, "ended the hunger of the Goths and the security of the Romans."

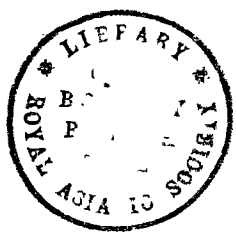
After this success Fritigern marched upon Hadrianople. He could not capture it at once and wisely raised the siege and marched westward and southward over the rich province of Thrace, a province which at this time officially reached northwards to the Danube. Everywhere the Goths were joined by their countrymen, some of whom were in the Roman military service, others had been detained as slaves.

During this turmoil Valens was at Antioch wasting his strength upon foolish wars with Persia. He now came to terms with that country, and gathering every available force marched into Thrace. For a time the Roman generals were successful, and the invaders were driven across the Balkans.

378. Valens now joined the army at Hadrianople and prepared for the supreme effort. He had corresponded with Gratian, his nephew, and knew that he was approaching with large reinforcements. But Valens was jealous of Gratian, who was popular and successful, and was eager to obtain a victory before he came. Hearing, therefore, that the enemy was near, and absurdly underestimating his strength, Valens determined to give battle. Both sides hesitated to begin, and some time was spent in negotiation. Valens seems to have doubted at the last moment whether he had not better postpone the engagement, and Fritigern's cavalry was absent. But the cavalry suddenly arrived, and swept upon the Roman army like a hurricane. The Roman generals were either taken by surprise or showed great incapacity. Their cavalry got separated from their infantry, and the infantry were so crowded that they could not use their weapons. It was Cannæ over again. The slaughter was terrible, the slain lay in heaps. At length such of the Romans as survived fled in confusion, and night fell. Valens was never found. It is said that he took refuge in an outhouse which was burned to the ground, the emperor perishing in the flames. But there is no certainty.

Two-thirds of the Roman army fell at Hadrianople, including very many officers of high rank. Had the Goths known how to take advantage of their victory and been

civilised enough to undertake the government of that which they had conquered, the eastern half of the Roman Empire would have been at their feet. But the weakness of the Gothic organisation politically made this impossible, and Rome had time to recover.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CHAPTER XXXI.

THEODOSIUS.

378. AFTER the terrible battle in which Valens fell the Goths marched upon Hadrianople, hoping to capture it with ease. But many fugitives had already reached the city, and with their help the garrison made a resolute defence. At length the Goths drew off their forces and the city was saved. They then marched upon Constantinople, but only to meet with further failure. They had not learned enough of the art of war to enable them to capture fortified cities, and they had to content themselves with the spoil of the provinces. Retiring therefore from Constantinople they ravaged the country even to the north-eastern confines of Italy. The Romans, defeated in the field, took a cruel vengeance by murdering the youthful hostages who were scattered over the empire.

The death of Valens left Gratian, his nephew, at the age of twenty master of the empire, having none but the infant Valentinian II. and Justina, his stepmother, to share his power. Wisely recognising that he could not cope singlehanded with so many enemies, and anxious to choose a colleague of ripe experience, he sent for Theodosius, the son of the eminent general
379. whose brilliant career and sad ending we have already described. Theodosius came at his call, and he proclaimed him Augustus at Sirmium on the Save. He gave to him the Eastern Empire just as Valens had it, but added Thrace and Eastern Illyricum. The whole duty of quelling the Gothic tribes, therefore, fell upon the new emperor, who was now thirty-four years of age.

Matters were in a critical state. The Goths were marching in triumph wherever they listed, the Romans were cowed. Theodosius acted with much wisdom and ran no risks. He

fixed his headquarters at Thessalonica, a central position from which he could more readily observe the seat of war. He refrained from giving the enemy battle in the field, but garrisoned the cities and strengthened their fortifications. When favourable opportunities occurred the garrisons sallied forth and attacked small parties of Goths. When they had thus recovered confidence they made more daring expeditions. By this cautious policy Theodosius was successful. Fritigern, the great Gothic leader, died; Athanaric, now an old man, made his peace; the younger Goths broke up into bands and were easily dealt with. Soon they were driven beyond the Balkans.

Theodosius fell sick and had to summon Gratian to his aid. 380.
The death of Fritigern made negotiation more easy, and Gratian found an opportunity of entering into a covenant with the Goths and making peace. Theodosius was laid aside for some months, but when he got better he gladly consented to the peace. The Goths were to be allies of the empire, bound on imperial summons to muster under their own chiefs and fight for the empire. Thousands of the younger Goths joined the regular forces; the rest were provided with lands. Thus, four years after the death of Valens, peace again reigned.

Two men who had been very powerful among the Goths passed away about this time. Ulfilas, the great missionary bishop whose life we shall deal with in the next chapter, and Athanaric, so long their king. Athanaric spent the last months of his life in Constantinople. Theodosius treated him with much courtesy, and when he died gave him a magnificent funeral, himself riding before the bier of the old chieftain. By actions such as these Theodosius showed his wisdom and did much to conciliate his Gothic subjects. Peace was finally concluded on the 3rd of October, 382, and in the same year Alaric, of whom 382.
we shall hear more hereafter, succeeded to the chieftainship of the Goths.

During these events a revolution had taken place in the Western Empire. Gratian had become unpopular. There were various causes for his unpopularity, of which, perhaps,

the favour shown by him to the barbarian soldiers may have been the most important. He had a body-guard of Alani, and preferred barbarians not infrequently in appointing to important commands. There was, at all events, discontent in the army, and unscrupulous men took advantage of it.

Maximus, who was in command of the troops in Britain, was proclaimed emperor and crossed into Gaul at the head of three regiments. Whether he was the instrument or the author of the mutiny we cannot say. Gratian had a considerable army and advanced to meet his rival, but his soldiers deserted wholesale. At length it was clear to the young emperor that his only safety lay in flight. Accordingly he fled, but was intercepted at Lyons and assassinated. He was but twenty-five years of age.

383. Magnus Maximus now ruled the western countries of Europe. He sent an embassy to Theodosius offering friendship, and Theodosius, whatever his private views may have been, accepted the alliance. He had only just brought the struggle with the Goths to an end, and was in no mood to begin a new war at that time. Theodosius stipulated, however, that the ambition of Maximus should be satisfied with what he had attained, and that the youthful emperor Valentinian II. should be undisturbed in Italy and Africa.

For a time Maximus respected the undertaking, but gradually began to threaten Valentinian, who sent Bishop Ambrose as an ambassador on more than one occasion to plead for peace. Ambrose was too overbearing a man to win much diplomatic success, but the substitution of a new ambassador, Domninus, a Syrian, was yet less fortunate. Domninus was well received, and Maximus proposed that, as a token of friendship, he should send troops to help Valentinian against the barbarians in Pannonia. Domninus agreed, the forces crossed the Alps as his guard, and when he reached Italy he found that he had been outwitted. Other forces crossed while the advance guard held
387. the passes, Valentinian fled and Maximus obtained possession of Italy without a blow.

Theodosius protected Valentinian and promised him his support. He married Galla his sister as a second wife, and made his preparations for the campaign with great care. At length he was ready, and, having divided his army into three bands, he crossed the Julian Alps and descended on Italy. Though Maximus had had plenty of time to prepare, he made no opposition worthy of the name. His armies were driven back; Aquileia, where he had taken refuge, was easily taken; and he was captured and executed forthwith.

The western province was now confirmed to Valentinian, 388.
Gratian's dominions being added to Italy and Africa. But Theodosius was recognised as supreme over the whole empire. He had now two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, and the former was associated with him in the government.

The wars in which Theodosius had been engaged were costly and taxation was oppressive. Theodosius was not a good financier, and taxes were not collected in an equitable way. There were riots in many places, and a specially serious one at Antioch. The people acted foolishly, dishonouring and 387.
even destroying statues of the emperor, and the civic authorities did not check them with sufficient zeal. Antioch had been a trial to many emperors, and Theodosius determined to teach the citizens a lesson. Accordingly he issued an edict closing the theatre and hippodrome and public baths, discontinuing the doles of corn, and degrading the city from the rank of capital to that of a village dependent upon Laodicea. Commissioners were sent to inquire judicially into the whole matter and to punish the guilty parties. During the trials the citizens of Antioch were in a state of the utmost terror. Flavian, the aged bishop, undertook a journey of 800 miles across Asia Minor in order to intercede for the people. Fortunately the commissioners carried out their duties with forbearance, and Theodosius forgave the city and restored its privileges.

After the defeat of Maximus, Theodosius resided at Milan. 388.
Here he came in contact with Bishop Ambrose. We shall have more to say about Ambrose in a later chapter. He was a well-

meaning man, who supported what he believed to be the rights of his Church on every occasion with blind zeal. He had used his power over Valentinian II. and Justina in most unsparing fashion and he endeavoured to treat Theodosius in the same way.

There were serious disturbances in the East at Callinicum, a city on the Euphrates, in the course of which the Christians burned a Jewish synagogue, and some orthodox monks burned the temple of a "heretic" sect. Theodosius ordered that the monks should be punished and that the bishop should rebuild the synagogue. The award was just, for the bishop could have stopped the mischief but encouraged it instead.

The dispute was not one with which Bishop Ambrose had any right to interfere, but he took up the cudgels on behalf of the other bishop, and addressed Theodosius in most arrogant and offensive language. He spoke of a synagogue "as the haunt of infidels, the home of the impious, the hiding-place of madmen, under the damnation of God Himself". He declared that the bishop of Callinicum would be a traitor to his office if he obeyed the imperial decree and rebuilt the synagogue, and he hoped that he would prefer martyrdom to betrayal. Other language he used even more impertinent. When Theodosius received the letter in dignified silence he preached at him from the pulpit, comparing the absolutely just action of Theodosius to that of David in his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah.

When a bishop, and more particularly a Catholic bishop, speaks thus, his action is not brave but the reverse. He knows well that his position makes retaliation impossible. Pressed thus unfairly by the bishop, Theodosius yielded and injustice triumphed.

389. In the eleventh year of his reign Theodosius visited Rome for the first time. The visit of an emperor to the imperial city was now a rare event. The city had ceased to be of political importance, and its social condition was full of corruption. Rich and poor lived for pleasure alone. Gambling, drinking,

racing, gaming made up the day. A small percentage were Christians, honourable men and women.

Next year, whilst Theodosius was at Milan, a terrible inci- 390.
dent occurred at Thessalonica. Brotheric, the commandant of the city, had imprisoned a popular charioteer for abominable crime, and the people, enraged because their favourite could not race, rioted and murdered Brotheric and his staff. After the murder they dragged their bodies through the city in triumph. The riot was absolutely without excuse, and the perpetrators of the crime deserved the most condign punishment. Theodosius and his officers were justly enraged. But if the crime was bad the method by which it was punished was worse. Thinking perhaps that a judicial inquiry would be difficult and not sufficiently striking in its consequences, Theodosius sent an army to occupy the city. The citizens were invited to public games, and when the circus was full the soldiers were let loose upon them. About 7,000 men, women and children were massacred.

We must not forget that Theodosius was in Milan, and that matters may have been carried further than he intended. But he must be held responsible, and he fell under the severe reproof of Bishop Ambrose, who forbade him to enter the church until he had undergone penance. After some time Theodosius 390.
yielded and was absolved.

Next year Theodosius returned to Constantinople, leaving 391.
Valentinian II. to rule alone. But Valentinian's further reign was brief. He was amiable and unselfish, but weak, lacking the strength necessary for the high position in which he was placed. The real ruler of the Western Empire was Arbogast, a brave Frankish captain, who for many years had done excellent service. Arbogast was hard, rough and fond of power, but had many good qualities and was adored by the soldiers.

Realising that Arbogast was master rather than servant, 392.
Valentinian endeavoured to dismiss him, but Arbogast treated his efforts with contempt, secure in the loyalty of the army. Worried, and believing his life to be in danger, Valentinian be-

came seriously ill, and died somewhat suddenly and mysteriously. It has been assumed that Arbogast connived at his murder, but it is just as likely that the young emperor committed suicide or even died a natural death. The fact that Arbogast permitted the body to be carried to Milan for burial tells somewhat against the theory of murder, and the fact that Valentinian had actually threatened to take his own life tells in favour of the theory of suicide. But he was in a depressed condition and may well enough have died a natural death.

Arbogast did not himself seize the throne, but set up Eugenius, a professor of rhetoric and an official in the civil service. Eugenius was a man of unblemished character and undoubted ability, and there is no need to speak disparagingly either of him or of Arbogast. It is clear, moreover, that Eugenius did not covet the position of emperor, for his elevation did not take place until three months after the death of Valentinian.

An embassy came from Eugenius to Constantinople and pleaded eloquently for peace, the Gaulish bishops who accompanied it declaring that Arbogast was not responsible for Valentinian's death. Theodosius does not seem to have been eager for war. Arbogast he knew to be a brave and well-tried soldier, the best general in the empire. The Frank, indeed, had been appointed commander of the Gallic armies by Theodosius himself. But Theodosius was married to Galla, the sister of Valentinian, and her influence probably left the emperor no choice but to avenge her brother's death.

More than two years elapsed after Valentinian's death before Theodosius invaded Italy, and just before the army set
394. out Galla died. Theodosius marched through Illyricum towards Aquileia, crossing the shoulder of the Julian Alps. He gained the summit of the pass with little opposition, and descending engaged the forces of Eugenius. The first day's battle was doubtful, but on the second day the forces of Theodosius were successful, and Eugenius was captured and slain.

Arbogast fled, and then, finding capture inevitable, fell on his sword and slew himself.

After the defeat Theodosius showed much clemency and soon won the loyal adhesion of all who had been against him. But he was a worn-out man, and he died within a year of the battle not yet fifty years of age. When he perceived that the end 395.
was approaching he made a disposition of his dominions. To Honorius, a boy of eleven, he bequeathed the Western Empire; to Arcadius, who was eighteen, and whom he had left as regent at Constantinople, he gave the Eastern Empire. He appointed Stilicho, an extremely able and trustworthy officer, chief administrator under Honorius, and Rufinus chief administrator under Arcadius. He commended both his sons to the kindly care of Bishop Ambrose, who was with him when he died. But the bishop did not long survive him.

The remains of Theodosius were removed to Constantinople and buried in the Church of the Apostles. Theodosius is commonly called "The Great". This title is a misnomer. He was an able man, an eminent man, so far as his light went a good man; but he was by no means a great man.

CHAPTER XXXII.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY—ATHANASIUS.

HAVING now brought the political history of the Roman Empire to the end of the fourth century it is well that we should glance for a little at the progress of Christianity among the people. In an earlier chapter we saw how Christianity, slowly living down calumny and persecution, gained a position in the empire, and became a force to be reckoned with. The patronage of Constantine opened a new era to the Church, happier in some ways, less happy in others. The Church rapidly lost its pristine purity. In earlier days few joined it who were not sincere, but now that it was under royal patronage communities professed Christianity in a mass. The spiritual nature of the Church of Christ was lost sight of, and assent to a creed took its place. Moreover, no sooner was the Church itself free from persecution than it became a persecutor.

When Constantine died there were two great parties in the Church, the Catholic or orthodox party, and the Arian. At first Constantine favoured the orthodox party, afterwards he became inclined towards the Arian, and it was in the ascendant at his death. But Constantine was a fair-minded Christian gentleman who allowed men to think for themselves. So long, therefore, as he reigned there was comparative peace. When he died he was succeeded by three sons, of whom Constantius succeeded to the throne of the Eastern Empire, and eventually became sole emperor. Constantius was not a Christian at all in the true sense of the word, but he was an intense partisan, and he threw himself into theological discussion with abundant energy. "Council was held against council; creed was set

against creed; anathema was hurled against anathema." Theological controversy became the fashion of the day, and amongst all classes of the people. Nor was controversy confined to words. Frequently it ended in blows and bloodshed.

The accession of Julian and the triumph of idolatry during his reign was a blessing to the Church, for it united Christians and put at least a momentary end to their quarrels. 361.

Julian was suceeeded by Jovian, a professing Christian, but a broad-minded man who allowed freedom of opinion to all, leaving Christians and idolaters alike unmolested. 363.

To Jovian succeeded Valentinian I. in the West and Valens in the East. Valentinian I. was orthodox but quite tolerant, both to Arians and idolaters. Valens, on the contrary, was an Arian and a persecutor. Good men were driven from the priesthood, some suffered martyrdom. On the death of Valens the Catholics recovered their power, and the Arians, after that time, never regained their former influence.

Gratian who succeeded his father Valentinian I. in the Western Empire was less tolerant of paganism than he had been. By this name, which signified peasant religion, the worship of idols was now known. Gratian declined the position of Pontifex Maximus, and took from the priests and temples many of their privileges. His successor, Valentinian II., influenced by Ambrose, acted on similar lines. 375.

Up to the reign of Theodosius idol worship, though discouraged, had been tolerated, but this powerful monarch endeavoured to suppress it altogether. Harsh and inquisitorial laws were passed. Sacrificing to idols, once the test of patriotism, was now considered equivalent to treason, and entailed loss of house and property. Theodosius doubtless meant well, but he did not realise that it was as sinful to persecute idolaters as to persecute Christians.

The people quickly took the cue from their rulers, and mobs of so-called Christians, led by fanatical priests, attacked the idol temples. At Alexandria there were terrible riots. Bishop Theophilus led a crusade against the shrines for which 391.

the city was famous, and notwithstanding the desperate resistance of the pagan party, the temples were destroyed and the images were overthrown. The overthrow of paganism was not undertaken in a Christian spirit, but was sought to be effected by murder and massacre.

Theodosius had been baptised into the orthodox faith, and did his utmost to obtain conformity. At a general council held
381. at Constantinople the Nicene Creed was finally established, with a clause stating in express terms the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The alteration brought the creed into the form which we now find in the liturgy of the Church of England, except that the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son was not mentioned at that time. The first appearance of the words "Filioque" (and the Son) in the Creed was at the Council of Toledo, in Spain, A.D. 589.

After the council at Constantinople Theodosius issued a decree commanding uniformity of doctrine throughout the empire:—

"We order those who follow this law to assume the name of Catholic Christians; we pronounce all others to be mad and foolish, and we order that they shall bear the ignominious name of heretics, and shall not presume to bestow on their conventicles the title of churches: these are to be visited, first by the Divine vengeance, and secondarily by the stroke of our own authority, which we have received in accordance with the will of heaven".

Next year a yet more stringent edict was issued:—

"Let there be no place left to the heretics for celebrating the mysteries of their faith, no opportunity for exhibiting their stupid obstinacy. . . . These doctrines are abundantly proved to us: these are to be reverenced. Let all who do not obey them cease from those hypocritical wiles by which they claim the name —the alien name—of the true religion, and let them be branded with the shame of their manifested crimes. Let them be kept entirely away from even the thresholds of the churches, since we shall allow no heretics to hold their unlawful assemblies

within the towns. If they attempt any outbreak we order that their rage shall be quelled, and that they shall be cast forth outside the walls of the cities, so that the Catholic Churches throughout the whole world be restored to the Orthodox prelates who hold the Nicene Faith" (Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, i., 368).

Persecution is always sad, but it is doubly sad when the orthodox persecute. For three centuries the Church had struggled on, far from perfect, yet maintaining a certain purity and sincerity which compelled the admiration of unbelievers. In the fourth century a good king, Constantine, took it under his patronage and gave it an official status and the salt quickly lost its savour:—

"Whilst the sanctifying and beatifying doctrines of the Gospel which point to the conversion of the inner man were suffered to lie inactive, every one from the emperor to the beggar occupied himself with incredible earnestness in the discussion of propositions, concerning which the Gospel communicates just so much as is profitable to us and necessary to salvation".

"This contentious spirit has torn asunder the Church; thrown cities into commotion, driven the people to take up arms, and excited princes against one another; separated the priests from the congregation and the congregation from the priests. Everything which bears a holy name has been profaned; . . . and we are divided, not merely tribe against tribe, as was Israel of old, but house against house, family against family, nay, almost every one is distracted within himself" (Ulmann's *Gregory of Nazianzum*).

The stirring events of the fourth century were fruitful in producing theologians whose names have been handed down to posterity. Unfortunately these men have the title of saint prefixed to their names and have thus been removed to a plane above that occupied by ordinary mortals, and endowed with semi-supernatural qualities. As a matter of fact they were ordinary men, not materially different from the hard-working

ministers of the Gospel by whom we are surrounded in the present day. It has suited certain persons to invent legends about them at which they would have been the first to laugh, and painters have placed halos above their heads. But they were merely clergymen who had their virtues, and, unfortunately, also their faults, for some of them, as we shall see, were bad tempered and overbearing. If we can forget all about this spurious saintship and think of the Fathers of the Church as men of like passions with ourselves we shall profit in a much greater degree by reading the story of their lives.

ATHANASIUS.—The greatest theologian of the fourth century was Athanasius. The name of this great divine has been associated with a creed of a stern and uncompromising character, and if we would appreciate the man we must begin by realising that he did not write the creed. It is of much later date.

Athanasius was born in Alexandria in 296. His first public
325. appearance was at the Council of Nicæa, which he attended in company with his superior, the bishop of Alexandria. He was then twenty-nine years of age, a man with a diminutive figure and a slight stoop, but with a beautiful face, keen eyes, and a most keen intelligence.

The council was summoned to decide the Arian controversy, and Athanasius evidently felt that in opposing Arianism he was defending the honour of his Lord. His dialectic gifts were manifest to all, and he was quickly recognised as the most distinguished champion present on the orthodox side.

Three years later Bishop Alexander died and Athanasius was chosen to succeed him. For nearly half a century after his election he led the orthodox party, holding to his opinions against all comers, and amidst all vicissitudes, with the utmost pertinacity.

As Arius was a presbyter of Alexandria, the battle between orthodoxy and Arianism raged in that city with special fury. After the Nicene Council Arius and certain of his followers,

among whom was Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, were excommunicated and exiled. When, shortly after, Constantine modified his views he recalled Eusebius, and gave Arius permission to return to Alexandria. Eusebius requested Athanasius to readmit Arius into the Church, but he refused, and when the emperor himself interfered, and even threatened punishment, Athanasius stood firm. Constantine, himself great, could recognise greatness, and forbore to carry matters to an extremity. Later, when charges were brought against Athanasius by his 332.
enemies, the emperor honourably acquitted him, declaring him to be "a man of God".

The somewhat unreasonable attitude taken up by Athanasius led to disturbances, and further charges were brought against him. Constantine did not credit the charges, but thought it better that Athanasius should leave Alexandria, and accordingly banished him to Trèves. The banishment was 336.
only nominal, for Trèves was a beautiful city, the seat of government of Constantine's eldest son, who treated Athanasius with every courtesy. He spent two and a half years in the city, corresponding freely with his old friends in Alexandria. Arius died shortly after, and soon Constantine himself passed away. The son, now one of three emperors, sent Athanasius back to his see, and he was received with rejoicing. 338.

Under the successors of the great emperor Athanasius had a stormy career. As bishop of Alexandria he was subject to Constantius, who was an Arian. Plots were laid for his overthrow, and Gregory, an Arian bishop, was sent to depose him. Athanasius withdrew and went to Rome. This was his second exile. He was accompanied by two youthful Egyptian monks, 341.
Ammonius and Isidore. These were dressed in monkish garb, and were at first ridiculed in Rome, but afterwards made a deep impression.

Athanasius remained in Rome three years, and did much to confirm the Latin Church in its adhesion to orthodoxy. He may be said also to have introduced monasticism into Rome. Constans befriended Athanasius, and persuaded his brother 343.

Constantius to meet him in conference on religious matters at Sardica, a town in Moesia. At this conference the innocence of Athanasius was declared, and the famous canon was enacted which provided for a reference in certain cases to the bishop of Rome.

345. When Gregory died Constantius reinstated Athanasius, and he returned to Alexandria, the whole population pouring forth to greet him.

350. By the death of Constans Athanasius lost a protector, for Constantius who now ruled in the West as well as in the East was an Arian. New plots were formed for his ruin, and the Councils of Arles and Milan pronounced against him. After
355. the Council of Milan the emperor proceeded to eject Athanasius from his see by force. He gave orders to the general of the Egyptian army, who encompassed a church in which Athanasius had taken refuge. There was much disorder and bloodshed, but Athanasius withdrew safely from Alexandria. During this his third exile he lived in the desert, hiding in monastic cells, cottages and caves. He wrote much during this period, and if his words were at times passionate it is not to be greatly wondered at.

361. When Julian succeeded, being an idolater and indifferent to Christianity, he permitted exiled bishops to return to their
362. sees. Athanasius returned among the rest, but opposed idolatry so vigorously that Julian threatened his life and he had to fly for the fourth time. Julian's reign was brief, and when Jovian, who was an orthodox Christian, succeeded, Athanasius again returned to his flock.

Jovian's reign was also brief, and he was succeeded by Valentinian I., who governed the Western Empire, committing the care of the Eastern to his brother Valens.

365. Valens, who was an Arian, endured Athanasius for a time, but afterwards issued an order that all bishops expelled by Constantius and recalled by Julian should be again expelled, so Athanasius had again to fly. During this, his fifth and last exile he is said to have lived for four months in a tomb. The

manner of burying the dead in Egypt is peculiar and tombs are not unsuitable for habitation, so it is likely enough.

At length an order of reinstatement was made, and Atha- 366.
nasius, now seventy years of age, was led back to his church. He was not again driven forth, and for seven years lived in peace, toiling earnestly at literary and pastoral work. His writings were numerous, and such as remain are highly prized, but the creed which bears his name was not composed by him. It was probably written about the middle of the fifth century, and its real author is unknown.

Athanasius was a great man, religious in a true sense, reverent, and loyal to his Redeemer. He was of a sensitive disposition, and affectionate to his friends. To his enemies he was perhaps over severe, but something may be forgiven to a man who was chased about so incessantly for conscience sake. His persistence did not spring from obstinacy but from the conviction that on the view which he advocated the very existence of Christianity depended.

Firm though Athanasius was, he always deprecated the use of violent means.

"Nothing," he said, "more forcibly marks the weakness of a bad cause than persecution. Satan, who has no truth to propose to men, comes with axe and sword to make way for his errors. Christ's method is widely different. He teaches the truth, and says: 'If any man will come after Me and be My disciple. . . .' If we open He comes in: if we will not open He retires; for the truth is not preached with swords and spears, not by bands of soldiers, but by counsel aud persuasion" (tr. from *Witnesses for Christ*, Backhouse & Tylor, vol. i., p. 37).

CHAPTER XXXIII.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY—ULFILAS, BASIL.

In the third century, during the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus, the Goths ravaged the Eastern Empire, and, crossing into Asia, invaded Cappadocia and Galatia. They returned laden with spoil, bringing many captives. Amongst the captives were Christians, and these induced some of their conquerors to embrace Christianity, and made the beginnings of a Church. That Christianity made progress amongst them is clear from the fact that a certain Theophilus, bishop from Goethia, was present at the first Nicene Council in 325. The ancestors of Ulfilas, the apostle of the Goths, are believed to have been amongst the Cappadocian captives.

311. Ulfilas was born about 311, and was well educated. Whilst still young he was sent as one of an embassy to the court of
332. Constantine, and he remained at Constantinople perhaps as a hostage for some years. During this period he made himself a master of the Greek and Latin languages. He also became acquainted with Eusebius, the Arian bishop of Nicomedia, by whom he was consecrated bishop of the Goths. As we have seen he was not the first who had borne that title.

343. After his consecration, being now thirty-two years of age, Ulfilas returned beyond the Danube, and preached the Gospel to his countrymen. So successful were his labours that Athanaric, prince of the Goths, believing Christianity to be conceived in the Roman interest, began to persecute its professors. So bitter did the persecution become that Ulfilas obtained the permission of Constantius to bring a party of Gothic Christians across the Danube and within the limits of the empire. They

were well received by the emperor, and settled in Moesia, receiving lands at the foot of the Balkans. Here they cultivated small holdings and struggled on, Ulfilas dwelling among them as teacher and governor.

That Ulfilas might the more freely spread the Gospel among his countrymen, he translated the Bible into Gothic. The Runic alphabet used by the Goths being unsuitable he invented a new alphabet of twenty-five letters based upon the Greek. This work marks an era in Church history. It was the first missionary Bible, the first translation of the Scriptures into the tongue of an unlettered people.

Ulfilas translated all the Bible except the Books of Samuel and Kings. These he omitted lest they should encourage his countrymen to war, of which they were already sufficiently fond.

Ulfilas' translation of the Bible was lost for many centuries, but in the beginning of the sixteenth century a manuscript was discovered in a Westphalian monastery containing about half the text of the four Gospels. This manuscript is now at Upsala. It is known as the Codex Argenteus, and is on purple vellum in letters of silver, a few words at the beginning of each section being in gold. It is believed to have been written in Italy, perhaps at Ravenna, about a century after the death of Ulfilas. Other manuscripts have been since discovered, by means of which a considerable portion of Paul's Epistles and parts lacking from the four Gospels have been supplied, as well as verses from Nehemiah and the Psalms, and references to passages in the Books of Genesis and Numbers.

The manuscripts thus recovered are of priceless value. They form amongst them the greatest monument of the Gothic language extant; a specimen of a Teutonic language three centuries earlier than any other that has been preserved. By means of these writings the philologist can trace the affinity between the Gothic of Ulfilas and the English of to-day. They also form an important link between ancient Sanscrit and the Teutonic tongue.

In his old age Ulfilas still retained his influence. When a

schism arose in the ranks of the Arians and no one else could heal it Theodosius sent for Ulfilas. He came, but the journey
383. was too much for his strength, and in Constantinople he sickened and died.

The translation of the Bible made by their great bishop was long regarded by the Goths and Vandals with superstitious awe. They carried it with them on their wanderings through Europe. It was taken to Rome and thence by the Vandals through Spain, across to Africa, and back to Rome. They had a habit of consulting it on the battlefield before the fight began, opening it by chance in the hope of finding a passage which would give them a favourable omen. If the Gothic method seems to us to be simple we must at least confess that it was a wonderful advance upon the method of the philosophic Greeks and warlike Romans who chose the auspicious moment from the appearance of the entrails of newly slain birds. Indeed the old Gothic habit finds reverent imitators among simple-minded folk even to the present day.

Ulfilas was a great man and used his life in a truly great way. To retranslate the sacred books into the language of culture as so many have done is a great task, but to translate them into the language of an unlettered race is a greater. It has been often done since, but the Gothic missionary showed men the way. And he did what he did not in the interest of philology, or in order to make himself famous, but merely that he might carry the Gospel to his people.

Ulfilas was not orthodox and there may have been many things in his views to which we would take exception. But we may speak of him as Constantine spoke of Athanasius. Ulfilas was a true "man of God," and the Teutonic races owe him a great debt of gratitude for his self-denying labours.

BASIL.—We may regard Athanasius as a representative of the African and Ulfilas as a representative of the Gothic Church, and shall now deal with a representative of the Church in Asia Minor.

Basilius, commonly called Basil the Great, was born at 329.
Cæsarea, the chief city of Cappadocia. His parents were Christians, and he was trained in his early years in the Christian faith. His mother Emmelia and his sister Macrina were both devoted Christians.

After distinguishing himself at school in Cæsarea Basil 351.
went to Constantinople, and thence to Athens. Among his fellow students at the university there were Prince Julian, the nephew of Constantine, and Gregory Nazianzen, both of whom were destined to become famous. Gregory and Basil, both very much in earnest, became fast friends. "We knew," says Gregory, "only two streets of the city: the first which led to the churches and the ministers of the altar; the other to the schools and the teachers of the sciences. The streets which led to the theatres, games and other places of unholy amusement, we left to others. Holiness was our chief concern; our sole aim was to be called Christians, and to be such."

Basil spent five years at Athens and then returned to Cæsarea, where he practised as an advocate and taught rhetoric. He was successful and became worldly and proud. His sister Macrina found him acting the fine gentleman and remonstrated with him. Unfortunately at this time the theory was current that one must either be a worldling or a recluse, so Basil determined to abandon his profession and retire from the world.

As a preliminary to retirement Basil left Cæsarea and spent 357.
some time wandering over Syria and Egypt, visiting the more famous of the ascetics who lived there. He resolved in some degree to imitate their example, and, reminding Gregory of early vows, begged him to join him in retirement. Gregory was living with his parents and was loth to leave them in their old age, so he proposed that Basil should live with him near his home. Basil agreed, but when he came to Arianzus he found the place so uncongenial that he did not continue to dwell there. Returning home he fixed on a spot near Annesi in Pontus where his mother and sister had established a sisterhood. Here

he lived for five years and acquired such a reputation for sanctity that devotees gathered around him until the retreat became like a village. Gregory joined him for a time, but was not happy, and declared that he should have been starved to death but for Basil's mother.

Though there were monastic institutions before the time of Basil, he generally gets the credit for having established them as agencies of the Christian Church. There had long been hermits, indeed from the very earliest times. But Basil perceived the superiority of the monastic to the solitary life. He tried the latter for a time, but found, as he very correctly puts it, that he was only like a man who being sea-sick tried to escape the rolling of a ship by getting into a boat. For the hermit he thought the temptation to idleness was too great to be overcome, and he thus made little spiritual progress. He advised, therefore, that a man should not go into the wilderness by himself, but that he should seek out a few like-minded men and live in communion.

Basil did not believe in idleness. His monks prayed hard, worked hard and lived hard lives. He ruined his own health by asceticism, and most of the Fathers did the same. But he obtained a high reputation for sanctity, and monasteries sprang up on all sides as the result of his preaching.

Basil did well, but he would have done better had he realised that sanctity is best attainable in connection with the family life which the Creator has ordained for man, and that nobility of character is best developed, not by flying from the evil which is in the world, but by bravely fighting it. The views of Chrysostom, of whom we shall speak later, were much more rational upon this matter than those of Basil.

"The monk," Chrysostom writes, "lives in a calm, where there is little to oppose him. The skill of the pilot cannot be known till he has taken the helm in the open sea in rough weather. Too many of those who have passed from the seclusion of the cloister to the active sphere of the priest or bishop, have lost their heads; and often, instead of adding to their

virtue, have been deprived of the good qualities which they already posessed. ·Monasticism often serves as a screen to failings which active life draws out, just as the qualities of metal are tested by fire" (Stephen's *Life of St. Chrysostom*).

When Julian ascended the throne it was his desire to have his early associates around him, and he invited Basil to Constantinople. But as the emperor had declared himself on the side of paganism, Basil very properly refused to come. Julian was much offended, and some time afterwards, taking occasion from some riotous conduct in Cæsarea, he fined Basil 1,000 pounds of gold. The fine was probably not meant seriously, and Basil pointed out how absurd it was to ask such a sum from a man who had scarcely enough to buy a meal. Julian was angry with both Basil and Gregory, and threatened to punish them when he returned from his Persian campaign. Probably he would have thought better of it, but in any case he never returned.

At this time Basil was not ordained. He shrank from the priesthood, and was ordained by Eusebius, the bishop of Cæsarea, greatly against his will. Gregory had been ordained 362.
notwithstanding similar reluctance shortly before. It is not easy for a modern to understand the theory of ordination which led to such results. After ordination Basil was of great use to the bishop of Cæsarea. Valens was then reigning, a strong Arian, and it required much courage to keep the banner of orthodoxy flying.

When Eusebius died Basil believed that it was essential to 370.
the well-being of the Church in Cappadocia that he should be his successor. Elections of bishops in the Church were at this time not conducted in anything like reputable fashion. Since the days of Constantine the bishop was of political as well as ecclesiastical importance, and where political feeling ran high the election was accompanied by tumult and even bloodshed. The true qualifications for such an office were little considered. One man was recommended because he was of aristocratic family, another because he was rich, a third because he was an

ardent politician. Bribery and undue influence were freely resorted to.

The election of Basil led to unseemly canvassing and to a deceitful action on his part which was the cause of estrangement between him and Gregory, and which made an ugly stain upon his character. It was unfortunately too much the habit for ecclesiastics in the early Church to argue that the end justified the means. There was not that robust regard for truth among the clergy to which we are happily now accustomed.

Basil was appointed, and soon his fame as a bishop spread far and wide. Many came to visit him, and his influence was not bounded by his diocese. But the times were troublous, for Valens reigned and Arianism was triumphant in the Eastern Empire. Basil stood up valiantly for the orthodox faith; resisting Valens and all the influence he brought to bear with a courage unsurpassed even by Athanasius himself.

Basil tried hard to persuade Gregory to be his coadjutor, but Gregory had not forgotten his deception and declined the office. Afterwards the friendship was resumed, but Basil treated Gregory so badly that the finer nature of Gregory again revolted, and the friendship was permanently broken.

Meanwhile Basil had been warring strenuously against Valens, who was carrying on a crusade against the Catholics. Many provinces had yielded to Arian influence, but Cappadocia still held out and its fate depended upon Basil. When a band of bishops arrived, accompanied by imperial officers, hoping to overawe the bishop by their numbers and importance they could not move him.

When Modestus, prefect of the Pretorium, threatened confiscation, exile, torture, death, Basil said that such threats were powerless to move one whose sole wealth consisted of a ragged cloak and a few books, to whom the earth was but a pilgrimage, whose feeble body would expire at the first stroke of torture, and to whom death would be a relief.

When Valens himself visited the bishop and entered the Church of Cæsarea with his retinue, he was so impressed by

the sincerity of the preacher and the solemnity of the vast congregation that he refused to exile him as he had intended.

The invasion of the Goths at length put an end to persecu- 377.
tion, and Valens perished in the terrible battle at Hadrianople. Gratian, the emperor of the West, belonged to the Catholic party, and so did Theodosius, whom he summoned to the Eastern throne. There would therefore have been happier times for Basil had he lived. But his frame was worn out, and he died 379.
at fifty, old before his time.

Basil left many writings, including nearly 400 letters full of human interest. He was a proud man, very masterful, and having implicit confidence in himself. With less self-confidence he would have had more friends. He did much service at a critical time, and was a valiant defender of the faith, and but for his self-sufficiency and the crookedness of his methods at times he might have had a claim to greatness. But he fell short of being a great man.

Some of his words show that at times he lived on a high spiritual level.

"We naturally love the beautiful. . . . What more admirable than the Divine beauty? What conception more attractive than the Majesty of God?"

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who endured a most shameful death that He might restore us to the glorious life, exacts no recompense, but is satisfied if He be only loved for what He gave. When I think of these things, I am in an ecstasy of fear lest ever, through inattention of mind or occupation with vanities, I should fall from the love of God, and become a reproach to Christ" (Smith, *St. Basil the Great*).

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY—GREGORY NAZIANZEN, AMBROSE.

GREGORY NAZIANZEN.—In speaking of Basil we had frequent
330. occasion to mention his friend Gregory. Gregory was born at Arianzus in Cappadocia, in the diocese of Nazianzus, of which his father was bishop. His mother was sincerely religious, but unfortunately also narrow minded, refusing to hold friendly intercourse with the heathen, of whom there were still many in the empire. Gregory met Basil at school in Cæsarea, and at the university of Athens they became fast friends.

356. When Gregory left Athens, at the age of thirty, he was anxious to consecrate his powers to God's service. As his parents were aged, he very properly desired to dwell with them, and endeavoured to make full consecration harmonise with daily duty. Unfortunately his idea of consecration involved monkish practices not easily carried out in private life. The thoughts which were in his mind at this time found utterance in exquisite lines which have been translated by Cardinal Newman;—

> Long was the inward strife, till ended thus:
> I saw, when men lived in the fretful world,
> They vantaged other men, but missed the while
> The calmness, and the pureness of their hearts.
> They who retired held an uprighter post,
> And raised their eyes with quiet strength toward heaven;
> Yet served self only, unfraternally.
> And so, 'twixt these and those, I struck my path,
> To meditate with the free solitary,
> Yet to live secular, and serve mankind.

Gregory did not find it easy to be in the world, and yet not of the world, and, although we believe this to be the ideal life,

yet we can understand how the semi-idolatrous society of that time was so permeated by corruption that good men were driven to despair, and came to the conclusion that one who desired to live a holy life must leave the world.

Gregory tried to live a hermit life at Arianzus, and invited Basil to join him. Basil came, but was not enamoured of the place, so he returned and started a monastery of his own. To this retreat he invited Gregory, and they lived together for a time. But however much Gregory might enjoy the communion, he found Basil's conception of cloister life too severe for his somewhat delicate frame. "Never shall I forget," he writes, perhaps partly in jest, "the broth and the bread; bread so hard that the teeth made no impression, and when they did effect an entrance were set fast as in a paste. Unless that true lady-bountiful, thy mother, had promptly come to my help, I had been dead long ago." Yet he could also say: "O that I could live again the sweet time we spent in the study of the Divine Oracles, and enjoy the light which, through the guidance of the Spirit, we found in them".

Gregory was in the path of duty at home, for his father, the bishop of Nazianzus, was extremely aged, and needed his son's support in his declining years. His father insisted on his ordination, and at length he yielded. Like Basil, he shrank from the priesthood, but the shrinking in each case arose from a perverted view with regard to the nature of the holy office. Instead of looking upon the priest as the servant and loving instructor of the people, they regarded him as a mediator between God and man. For this office they counted themselves unfit, and they were right.

After ordination Gregory fled for a time from his charge, and so offended the Church that, when he returned, the people demanded a public apology. Gregory replied in a dissertation upon pastoral duty, which remains famous until this day.

When Basil was contesting the election to the bishopric of Cæsarea, he desired to obtain the help of Gregory, and fearing that his friend would shrink from the business in hand he pre-

tended to be dangerously ill. When Gregory discovered the fraud he was intensely grieved and was never again so friendly with Basil. Afterwards he tried to forgive and forget, but Basil dragged him into a quarrel which he had with a neighbouring bishop. He went further, for entirely against Gregory's better judgment he coerced him into accepting ordination as a suffragan bishop to a see which he had himself created. It was at Sasima, an obscure town where Gregory's talents would have been quite buried, and it landed him in constant conflict with a rival bishop. Gregory's gentle nature revolted, he refused to act, and the friendship between the men was broken. Basil was a man bent upon having his own way; Gregory was sensitive and yielding by nature. But even Gregory could be severe at times. His attacks upon Julian are not pleasant reading, and manifest very little of the spirit of Christ. His fulsome praise of Constantius is even harder to understand. This emperor, who began his career by wholesale assassination, and continued to support impiety and to persecute good men, is spoken of as "the most divine and Christ-loving of emperors, whose great soul is summoned from heaven".

Basil and Gregory were good men, and did good work at a time when good work was sorely needed. They were inferior to Athanasius in spirit, though perhaps his equals in mental endowment. They lived in difficult times, and we who live in easy times must not judge them harshly. But it would be absurd to imagine that they were possessed of qualities which entitle us to consider them superior to other Christians in the matter of saintship.

374. Gregory acted as his father's coadjutor until he died, disregarding the bishopric of Sasima to which Basil had appointed him. After his father's death he entered a monastery in Isauria and lived for three years in seclusion.

The long persecution to which the orthodox faith had been subjected by Valens had so discouraged and reduced its adherents that, in Constantinople, they were now but a small flock without church or bishop. When Valens was slain

and Gratian was for a time sole emperor the Catholics took courage and invited Gregory to be their pastor. Having assented, he began his ministrations by preaching in a private house. His preaching attracted attention and he soon became famous. During this period one of his adherents was Hieronymous, better known as Jerome. Jerome speaks of Gregory as a "most eloquent man from whom I learned to expound the Scriptures".

When Theodosius became emperor Gregory was appointed 380.
bishop at Constantinople. But his enjoyment of the distinction was brief. It was a time of bitter conflict, and Gregory was not a party man. When therefore he found that he could not persuade the clergy to live at peace, he resigned his charge and again went into retirement.

"If any of our friends," he writes, "should inquire about Gregory, say that he is enjoying in perfect quiet a philosophical life, and that he troubles himself as little about his enemies as he does about persons of whose existence he knows nothing."

Invited to attend a synod at Constantinople, he replied: 382.
"I am in such a temper of mind that I shun every assemblage of bishops, because I have never yet seen a good issue to any synod, have never been present at any which did not do more for the multiplication than for the suppression of evils".

Gregory's preaching was very practical and often very elevating in character. We have blamed him for his invective against Julian; let us praise him for the following:—

"Do not rashly condemn thy brother. It is like pulling up with the weeds the hidden fruit which is possibly of more value than thou art. Raise up thy brother gently and lovingly. Learn to know thyself in the spirit of humility and to search out thy own infirmities. It is not one and the same thing to pull up or destroy a plant or a man. Thou art an image of God and thou hast to do with an image of God—thou who judgest wilt thyself be judged. In our Father's house are many mansions, and the ways which lead to them are various."

Gregory was a poet of considerable merit. We have already

seen some of his lines; let us conclude our sketch with others, which will not only help us to appreciate his devotional character, but also show us how little after all, the thoughts of men have varied throughout the centuries.

What lies before me? Where shall set my day?
Where shall these weary limbs at length repose?
What hospitable tomb receive my clay?
What hands at last my failing eyes shall close?
Whose eyes will watch me—eyes with pity fraught,
Some friend of Christ's? Or those who know Him not?

Or shall no tomb, as in a casket, lock
This frame, when laid a weight of breathless clay,
Left without burial on the desert rock,
Or thrown in scorn to birds and beasts of prey,
Consumed and cast in handfuls on the air,
Or sunk in some dark stream to perish there?

This as thou wilt. The day will all unite,
Wherever scattered, when thy word is said
Rivers of flame, abysses without light,
Thy great Tribunal, these alone I dread:
But Thou, O Christ, art fatherland to me,
Strength, wealth, repose, yea all, I find in Thee.

340. AMBROSE.—This celebrated leader of the Christian Church was born in Gaul. His father, a prætorian prefect, devoted him to the legal profession, and in this he advanced rapidly until he became consular magistrate at Milan.

374. When Ambrose was thirty-four years of age the bishop of Milan died, and a fierce dispute arose between the Catholics and Arians as to his successor. At one election meeting held in a church there was so much excitement that a riot was feared, and Ambrose was called in as magistrate to restore peace. Whilst he was remonstrating with the throng some one shouted, "Ambrose for bishop," and the suggestion was taken up with the utmost enthusiasm. Ambrose was not in holy orders, was not even baptised, but he was a man in whom the people had full confidence. They would take no refusal, and notwithstanding his strenuous opposition he was elected and consecrated to the office.

After his appointment Ambrose threw himself whole heartedly into his work, giving himself wholly to the study of theology and the administration of his diocese. The dignity of the magistrate and the zeal of the Churchman combined with considerable mental endowments to produce an ecclesiastic of a type then somewhat unusual. "Ambrose," says Milman, "was the spiritual ancestor of the Hildebrands and the Innocents."

Ambrose fell in with the mistaken notions about celibacy which were then taking hold of the priesthood, and went even so far as to praise girls who took the veil without their parents' consent. He also fostered the rage for relics, and the belief that they were capable of curing disease. It must also be noted that the first clear sanction of the invocation of angels is in the writings of Ambrose. But there were times when he showed clearer vision. The Gothic invasions had brought much misery upon the inhabitants of Thrace and Illyricum, and many had been carried into captivity. Ambrose set himself to redeem the captives. Collections were made in the churches, the treasure chests were emptied, and, when all did not suffice, the sacramental vessels were melted down and sold for the good cause. "The Church," Ambrose wrote, "possesses gold, not to hoard, but to distribute for the welfare and happiness of men."

Ambrose had a long tenure of office and saw many emperors, Valentinian I., Gratian, Valentinian II., and Theodosius reigned during his time, and though he was a domineering man, he was useful, and his relations with them were generally satisfactory.

Gratian passed ordinances confiscating the property of the temples and taking away the privileges of the heathen priests. Through the influence of Ambrose, Gratian refused to amend the ordinances, and when Valentinian II. succeeded, through the same influence they were confirmed.

When Gratian was preparing to assist Valens against the Goths, knowing that his colleague was an intense Arian, he asked Ambrose to write a treatise for him in defence of the orthodox faith. The treatise known as *De Fide* was the result.

At times Ambrose carried his zeal for orthodoxy so far as to be unjust. When he was asked to allow even one church to
386. be devoted to Arian worship in the city of Milan he refused. There were many Arians amongst the Gothic auxiliaries in Milan, and the action of Ambrose was as tyrannous and narrow-minded as it would be for the British Government to deny to Catholic soldiers the consolations of their religion. When the dowager-empress, who was herself an Arian, first pleaded with him and afterwards tried to coerce him, he attacked her from the pulpit, calling her a Jezebel and a Herodias. The young emperor, a boy of fourteen, protested against this treatment of his mother in vain.

In a former chapter we saw how Ambrose erred in another matter. When the Jewish synagogue at Callinicum had been burned by a Christian mob, and Theodosius ordered that the bishop should rebuild it, Ambrose stood forth as champion of the wrongdoers.

"I protest," he said, "that I myself would have burnt the synagogue. . . . If the bishop shall comply with the mandate he will be an apostate. . . . What has been done is but a trifling retaliation for the acts of plunder and destruction perpetrated by the Jews and heretics against the Catholics." Ambrose knew not what spirit he was of.

When Theodosius persisted Ambrose attacked him from the pulpit, and, by threatening to withhold communion, compelled him to cancel the order. Thus do we perceive how in the history of the Christian Church superstition and priestly tyranny have ever advanced hand in hand.

390. Two years later the massacre of Thessalonica, of which we have also already spoken, took place. Brotheric, the commandant, had imprisoned a popular charioteer for abominable crime. The races came on and the people demanded that their favourite should be released, and when Brotheric refused they murdered him and his staff. Theodosius was justly enraged. Ambrose pleaded for mercy, but he had already condoned the riot at Callinicum, and the household officers determined that

he should not condone this. Accordingly they obtained secret instructions from Theodosius with the terrible results already recorded.

Ambrose called the emperor to repentance, and when he presented himself at the church refused him admittance. At the end of eight months Theodosius performed penance publicly. Laying aside his royal garments, he lay prostrate upon the pavement, crying, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken Thou me, according to Thy word".

The massacre of Thessalonica was a sad stain upon the character of Theodosius. But the provocation was terrible and the repentance was sincere. We should admire the attitude of the bishop more did we not know that Theodosius had but carried out the doctrine of retaliation which the bishop had laid down. The mighty emperor, who humbled himself in the presence of his Maker and before the people, was nearer the kingdom of God than the haughty and inconsistent prelate.

It is pleasant to know that Theodosius bore Ambrose no grudge for his severity, but rather esteemed him the more. 395.
On his death-bed he committed his sons Arcadius and Honorius to his care. But two years later Ambrose himself passed 397.
away.

Ambrose had much musical taste, and improved Church music, especially of the antiphonal order. Amongst the writings which he left are several hymns. The following verses were favourites of Augustine, who declared that he owed much to the influence of Bishop Ambrose :—

HYMN AT THE COCK-CROWING.

Eternal Maker of the world,
  Who rulest both the night and day,
With order'd times dividing Time,
  Our toil and sorrow to allay.

The watchful herald of the dawn
  Announces day with trumpet shrill;
Lamp to the wayfarer at night,
  Night from itself dividing still.

The morning star arising bright
  Dissolves the darkness from the sky;
And, startled from their baleful schemes,
  The armèd powers of darkness fly.

The mariner reknits his strength;
  The stormy sea is lull'd to sleep;
And Peter, called the Church's Rock,
  Hearing this sound, his sin doth weep.

Jesus, upon the falling look,
  And looking, heal us, Lord, we pray;
For at Thy look the fallen rise,
  And guilt in tears dissolves away.

Do Thou, our Light, illume our sense,
  Do thou our minds from slumber free;
For Thee our voices first proclaim,
  And with our lips we sing to Thee.

CHAPTER XXXV.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY—JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, JEROME.

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.—The name by which this distinguished Father of the Church was known during his life was John. The surname "Chrysostom" (golden mouthed), was a compliment added during the fifth century.

Chrysostom was born at Antioch. His father was a mili- 347.
tary officer, but his mother, a sincere Christian, was left a widow at twenty, and determined not to marry again in order that she might devote herself wholly to the education of her boy.

After his early studies Chrysostom became an advocate, but after some experience of the profession determined to abandon it in favour of the monastic life. His mother, however, having given up so much for him pleaded that he would not desert her, and like Gregory Nazianzen he determined to lead a consecrated life without leaving his home.

After the death of his mother Chrysostom retired to a monastery on the mountains to the south of Antioch. Here he spent four happy years. But finding the monastery too comfortable for his purpose he left it and took up his abode in a cave. Here he spent two years in hardship and solitude. The result was that he returned to his home in Antioch in broken health.

Chrysostom taught as a deacon for five years, and then was 386.
ordained presbyter. In this capacity he toiled hard for ten years, preaching several times weekly. Whenever he preached the church was thronged, and there is a modern suggestiveness in the fact that he had to warn his hearers to beware of pick-

pockets. But Chrysostom was not carried away by popular applause. "Most men listen," he said, "not for improvement, but to be pleased, and to criticise, just as though a player or musician were before them." The habit of congregations has not altered materially in this respect. In other matters habits have altered, for it is interesting to know that in the days of Chrysostom the congregation stood and the preacher remained seated.

After the death of Theodosius I., Arcadius his son became emperor at Constantinople, and Eutropius was his chief minister of State. The bishop of Constantinople died about the same time, and Eutropius elected Chrysostom to the see.

Chysostom would naturally expect that his sphere of usefulness would be increased in the capital, but this did not prove to be the case. His predecessor had been a free living man, and neither court nor clergy desired to have a bishop who lived an ascetic life and despised social intercourse. But Chrysostom lived on simple fare and avoided the company of the great. Moreover, he endeavoured to reform the Church, and attacked the prevailing corruption fearlessly from the pulpit. Thus he raised up many enemies. He had himself to thank in some measure for this, for he did not attempt to keep his temper under control, and he rather enjoyed hitting hard. This delighted the common people and they thronged to hear him, but the court party and the clerical dignitaries did not enjoy it.

Chrysostom did excellent work among the Goths. They were now numerous in the neighbourhood of the capital, and he set apart a church for Divine service in their native tongue. The Bible was read in Ulfilas' version, and sermons were delivered by Gothic preachers. Sometimes the bishop himself would preach, using an interpreter. Chrysostom also sent missionaries to the tribes on the Danube and to the nomads of Syria.

For a time Chrysostom enjoyed the favour of Eudoxia, the empress, and he praised her devotion highly in his sermons. But when he attacked the court she turned against him. We

cannot altogether blame her. Chrysostom used language which was perfectly indefensible, forgetting that he was speaking of a lady and of his queen. The people thronged his church the more, but the words sank deeply and bore bitter fruit. At length the court party and the clergy opened a campaign against him. The Arians, eager to recover some of their lost influence, joined the ranks of his enemies. He was tried on various pretexts, condemned, deposed, banished.

The people would have defended their popular preacher by force, but Chrysostom bowed to the storm and was carried on board a ship bound for Bithynia. The following night there was an earthquake. Earthquakes were not uncommon in Constantinople, but the people believed this one a judgment on the city for its treatment of their favourite, and raised a riot. Eudoxia also was superstitious about it and begged the emperor to recall him.

Chrysostom returned amid popular rejoicing, and it seemed as if there might be peace. He was once more on good terms with the empress, and praised her in his discourses. For the breach which followed he was responsible. A statue of the empress had been cast in silver and set up in the market place in front of the Church of St. Sophia. It was dedicated, as one would expect, with pomp and revelry, and the sound of the music and dancing was heard in the church and disturbed the service. Instead of exercising a little patience, Chrysostom lost his temper, and is reported to have used offensive language against the empress: "Herodias is once more maddening; is once more dancing; once more she demands the head of John on a charger". The words were conveyed to Eudoxia, and she was naturally incensed.

The bishop's enemies again gathered, a council was called, 403.
and sentence of deposition was passed. Arcadius acquiesced, and when Chrysostom refused to cease his ministrations the church was cleared by the soldiers. Arcadius then signed a decree of banishment, and Chrysostom was conveyed to the Asiatic shore. That night the cathedral, a magnificent building

erected by Constantine the Great, was totally destroyed by fire. The coincidence was too striking to be overlooked. Chrysostom's friends were suspected and hunted down with merciless severity.

Chrysostom was conveyed to Nicæa and thence to Cucusus, a village in the Taurus mountains, chosen because of its inclemency. The journey was distressing, but when Chrysostom reached Cucusus, all was well. His reputation had preceded him, and he was received with much kindness. Comforts were provided by admiring friends, many came to visit him, he had a voluminous correspondence, and the three years he spent there he declared to have been the happiest of his life. But this did not suit his enemies. They desired his death, and, angry that he should still be living a useful life, they obtained a rescript from the emperor transferring his place of exile to Pityus on the Black Sea. Eudoxia cannot be blamed for this, for she was dead. It would almost seem as if the empress protected him somewhat whilst she lived. His most bitter foes were probably from amongst those who dreaded lest some turn of the wheel of fortune might bring about his recall.

Guards were sent to convey Chrysostom to Pityus. They had their instructions, and he was hurried from place to place on foot, even with blows. At last his strength gave way, and
407. near Comana he was carried into a chapel, where, at the altar, he breathed his last. He was sixty years of age.

Thirty-one years later, in the reign of Theodosius II., the remains of Chrysostom were reverently carried from Comana to Constantinople, and interred with pomp.

John Chrysostom was a man of strong will, pure life and noble purpose. But he was tactless and passionate. His early austerities ruined his health and his temper. But he had a touch of humour amidst it all. A brutal official once threatened to tear his liver out. "I wish you could," said Chrysostom, "for it has been nothing but a trouble to me for years."

Chrysostom was the author of numerous treatises, expositions and homilies, from which much of merit may be culled.

What could be better than his plea for Bible study? It is a mistake to imagine that the Scriptures were scarce in those days. Copies were numerous. "Even Britain," says Chrysostom, "abounds with the Word of Life."

"Give yourselves," he said, "to the reading of Holy Scripture; not merely at church, but when you return home take your Bible in hand and dive into the meaning of what is written therein. . . . Seating yourselves, as it were, beside these waters, even although you may have no one at hand to interpret, yet will you by diligent study acquire great benefit. . . . Divine Providence ordained that the Scriptures should be written by publicans, fishermen, tent-makers, shepherds, goatherds, that they should be intelligible to all, that the artisan, the poor widow, the slave might derive advantage from them. . . . Let no one say, 'I am fully occupied with business in court, or the interests of the State, or my craft; I have a wife to care for, children to maintain, a household to manage; I am a man of the world and it is not for me to read the Scriptures. The duty belongs to those who have betaken themselves to the mountains for that purpose.' How! is it not forsooth because thou art surrounded with worldly cares that thou hast more need than they to read thy Bible?"

It was Chrysostom's practice to give out his text beforehand, in order that the congregation might prepare for the sermon by Scripture study. He was eloquent and evangelical, and approached nearer our modern conception of what a preacher should be than any other of the Fathers.

JEROME.—Eusebius Hieronymus, better known as Jerome, 340.
was born at Stridon, near Aquileia, on the Adriatic. His parents were Christians and prosperous people, and he was educated at Rome. There he lived loosely, but when he reached manhood he reformed and was baptised.

At the age of twenty-five Jerome was in Aquileia, one of a circle of young men devoted to asceticism and sacred study. But the company was suddenly broken up. The reason is not

precisely known, but it is possible that even thus early Jerome was showing a capacity for making enemies which followed him through life.

373. Along with Rufinus, the bosom friend of Jerome's youth, but his bitter foe in riper years, Jerome travelled through Thrace and Asia Minor, as far as Antioch. On their travels they made the acquaintance of Basil, and met many monks by whom Jerome was inspired with a desire for the life of solitude.

Jerome afterwards took up his abode in the desert of Chalcis, about fifty miles east of Antioch. In this desert monks and hermits abounded, and here he lived for five years. But after the first charm had passed away Jerome was miserable. He studied hard and wrote diligently. But he found that a man did not escape from himself even in the desert. Moreover, even among the monks of the desert there was bitter theological strife, and Jerome was not on the popular side. The monks thought him little better than a heretic and persecuted him. They even took away his paper, so that he was reduced

379. to writing on rags. At last he fled to Antioch. In Antioch he accepted ordination, only stipulating that after ordination he should have freedom to live as he liked.

380. After these things Jerome went to Constantinople. There he made the acquaintance of Gregory Nazianzen, of whom he speaks with high respect. His eyes troubled him at this time, and he had to dictate to an amanuensis. This became habitual to him, though he did not entirely give up writing with his own hand.

382. Jerome next went to Rome. His reputation as a scholar had preceded him and for a time he had influence. He was even looked on as a likely successor to Damasus, the bishop of Rome. He spent his time in revising the translation of the Scriptures and in theological controversy. Especially did he advocate asceticism. He was an uncompromising advocate of celibacy and wrote a treatise on the subject. Advocates of celibacy for the most part found their views with regard to sexual intercourse upon that which is illicit and vile. Of the

pure and saintly institution of marriage and the family life, the Creator's best earthly gift to man, they have no experience and little conception. This was Jerome's case. In his youth he had led a sensual life and he knew little of any higher.

Unfortunately, Jerome was now surrounded by women who hung upon his words, and he made converts among Roman ladies of rank. To these he was guide, philosopher and friend. But he was not a safe guide. "The letters which he wrote to these ladies," says Maitland, "are a fearful monument of the social effects of the monastic system."

Jerome was a dauntless man and a splendid worker. But there is wonderfully little proof either in his life or writings that he had any experimental knowledge of Christianity. This we may at least affirm of his youth and riper years. Perhaps at eventide when he had passed through much suffering, and was poor and apparently little esteemed, there may have been light.

Jerome soon found his life in Rome unbearable. His fanatical aversion to marriage and the fact that he made converts to his views amongst ladies of good family raised up enemies and gave rise to much scandal. His style of argument, moreover, did not make matters easier, for he was always supercilious and often scurrilous. Accordingly he became very unpopular, calumny was busy with his name, he was hooted in the streets, and people spoke of throwing him into the Tiber.

At this period bishop Damasus died. Under ordinary circumstances Jerome would have been elected pope, but now, notwithstanding his scholarship, he was impossible, and a rival was elected. Bitterly disappointed, but never realising how much he had himself to blame for his failure, Jerome left Rome and determined to return to a life of solitude.

Amongst Jerome's admirers the most important was Paula, a noble and devout widow. Paula resolved to share her teacher's exile, and with other ladies in her company set out on the pilgrimage. After visiting many sacred places in Palestine they

settled at Bethelehem, then much frequented by pilgrims. Here, by degrees, they built a monastery, three convents, a church and a hospice.

In Bethlehem Jerome spent the remaining thirty-four years of his life. Adopting as his personal abode one of the rock-hewn chambers which are still to be seen there, he surrounded himself with his books and toiled unceasingly. By earnest application he had become a master of Hebrew, Greek and Latin. At Rome he had corrected the Latin version of the Gospels; he now corrected the Latin version of the Old Testament.

Afterwards Jerome undertook a work of high importance, a complete retranslation of the Scriptures. The Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew, the New Testament from the best Greek manuscripts that could be found. Upon this work Jerome bestowed infinite pains, consulting the best available authorities, and travelling through Palestine to identify sacred places. The Vulgate is in substance the result of Jerome's work, the edition of the Scriptures recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, and appearing in English as the Douay Bible.

Jerome's earnest work did not prevent him from carrying on controversy in quite the old spirit. A discussion with his friend Rufinus about the views of Origen led to permanent estrangement. Augustine, deeply grieved to see good men quarreling, entreated Jerome not to scatter such hard words abroad, but his pleading was in vain.

With Augustine also Jerome had a controversy, but on this occasion he had a legitimate grievance, for Augustine wrote letters attacking him and published them, although Jerome had never seen them, and did not see some of them for years afterwards.

From Bethlehem Jerome also attacked Jovinian, a monk who dared to write a book upon what we would now term Protestant lines. He controverted the perpetual virginity of Mary, which was now becoming an article of faith in the

Church; denied the superior merits of celibacy, and maintained that the ordinary Christian life was or ought to be as holy as the monastic. Jovinian's common sense was regarded as gross impiety, and all who dared to think with him were excommunicated.

Ambrose spoke of Jovinian's statement that there was no difference of merit between the married and unmarried as "a savage howling of ferocious wolves scaring the flock". Jerome also took up the cudgels and called Jovinian's views "the hissing of the old serpent by which the dragon expelled man from Paradise". It never apparently occurred to either Ambrose or Jerome that by their vulgar abuse they were proving Jovinian's contention. Jerome's language shocked even those who were in sympathy with his views, and they begged him not to publish his book, but he persisted.

Paula died at the age of fifty-six. Concerning her deep 404.
sincerity and devoutness there can be no controversy. She shortened her life by useless austerity, and beggared herself by indiscriminate almsgiving. But she was a good and gracious woman. She loved the Scriptures and stored them in her memory. Her self-denying faith, her care for the poor, her childlike trust, were genuine marks of a true follower of Jesus Christ. The words which Jerome wrote in her memory are amongst his best.

"Farewell, O Paula, and help by thy prayers the old age of him who bears thee a religious reverence. Thy faith and works have joined thee to Christ, and being now present with Him, thou wilt the more easily obtain what thou desirest. . . . We do not weep because we have lost her; we thank God that we once possessed her. What do I say? We possess her still, for the elect who ascend to God still remain in the family of those who love them."

At this time the Roman Empire was in evil case. The northern nations had broken down the barriers, and were pouring in like a flood. The Isaurians laid waste Northern Palestine, and for a time the colony at Bethlehem seemed in

such peril that all assembled on the shore ready to set sail. Then came news that the invaders were passing on the north of Lebanon.

410. At last Rome herself was captured by Alaric the Goth. Amongst the inhabitants who fled some found their way even to Bethlehem. Jerome was amazed at the course of events.

"The world crumbles, our head knows not how to bow down. That which is born must perish, that which has grown must wither. There is no created work which rust or age does not consume;—but Rome! who could have believed that raised by her victories above the universe, she would one day fall, and become for her people at once a mother and a tomb."

416. Jerome's later years were stormy like the rest. The Pelagian controversy raged, and he flung himself into it with ardour. A dialogue published against the Pelagians so roused the ire of the monks of Jerusalem, who were mostly Pelagians, that they took up arms, attacked the colony at Bethlehem, and destroyed some of the buildings.

419. Jerome's health was never robust, yet he lived to be an old man. He was very feeble before he died, and used to raise himself in his bed by the aid of a cord fixed to the ceiling, the plan so common still in our hospitals. The date of his birth is disputed, and his age is therefore uncertain. It is variously reckoned from seventy-four to eighty-nine.

Jerome died in great poverty, but continued his Biblical work to the last. It is pleasant to know that in his last days Paula, a grandchild of his devoted disciple, ministered to him.

Opinions will differ with regard to the character of Jerome and the value of his personal influence. But concerning his extrordinary diligence, his tenacity of purpose, and the high value of his labours there can be no difference of opinion. Nor should we forget the courage with which Jerome persisted in his work of translation in the face of opposition. The Septuagint was looked on as itself inspired, and in daring to correct it Jerome was believed to be shaking the foundations

of the Christian faith. Even Augustine tried to turn him from his purpose.

During the lifetime of Jerome his version of the Scriptures was coldly received, but by the seventh century it had won its way and was superseding the older versions. At last in 1546 the Council of Trent decreed that the Vulgate edition should be held for authentic in public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions, and that none should dare to refuse it.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AUGUSTINE.

354. AUGUSTINE was an African, born at Thagaste in Numidia. His father, Patricius, was a pagan; his mother, Monica, a Christian.

Having received such education as the schools of Thagaste could give, Augustine was sent to the university of Carthage. He was then seventeen years of age. His father had died and his mother was not rich, but she was enabled by the generosity of friends to complete her son's education.

Augustine's university career was unsatisfactory. He studied with some industry, and his natural genius kept him well in the front, but he was dissolute. He kept a mistress, and had an illegitimate son whom he named Deodato. Monica had the sorrow of seeing her son leaving the university an unbeliever in Christianity and apparently an unprincipled man. But she prayed earnestly for him, and in due time her prayers were answered.

383. After teaching rhetoric in Carthage for a time, Augustine resolved to go to Rome. Monica was greatly against this, and Augustine went surreptitiously. Monica was frantic with grief, not knowing that in this way God was really giving her her heart's desire.

From Rome Augustine went to Milan. Ambrose was bishop there, and the young rhetorician had an introduction to him. The bishop received him kindly, and he attended his church services. He did this to begin with out of respect for the man and admiration for the orator, but gradually he fell under the influence of his preaching and changed his attitude towards Christianity. Others also helped him, and at last he saw the

light. His mother was now with him in Milan and could rejoice in answered prayer.

After his baptism Augustine proceeded with his mother to Rome, intending to return home to Africa. But at Ostia, when they were resting in order that Monica might gain strength for the voyage, she died. She was a noble-minded and altogether lovely woman to whom her son owed everything. 387.

After Monica's death Augustine stayed a year in Rome. Thence he went to Africa, and dwelt at Thagaste, his native town, in a small religious community of like-minded men. 388.

Three years later having gone to Hippo, a city in Algeria now called Bona, he was ordained by Bishop Valerius, after which he removed to that city and established his monastery there. 391.

When Valerius died Augustine was elected as his successor. He was popular, and the episcopal residence became a school of theology and a monastery combined. The clergy lived in celibacy and poverty but without display of asceticism. 396.

Augustine's views were of the high Catholic order. Like many good men he did not sufficiently differentiate between the community of believers which Christ calls his Church, and the visible human organisation which men call the Church. This organisation was to him an ark outside of which there was no salvation. Sincerely believing this he regarded persecution as quite admissible. Surely it was better to drive men into the ark by blows than to leave them outside to drown. So warped was his judgment in this matter, that he claimed as Scriptural warrant for oppression our Saviour's words in the parable "compel them to come in".

The views held by Augustine brought him quickly into conflict with the Donatists, a sect very numerous in Northern Africa. They had separated from the Church on the ground of discipline. They believed that the existence of a Church depended upon the holiness of its members, and objected to an organisation which held both believers and unbelievers within

its pale. Holiness was above everything else, and unless a Church were holy it was no Church at all, no matter how correctly its succession from the Apostles might be traced.

Though views much like those of the Donatists will always be held wherever Christianity exists, the sect as such was largely confined to the North African province where the Donatists were as numerous as the Catholics. The African Church was in fact divided into two rival communities, and Augustine confounding the true Church of Christ with the organisation to which he belonged determined to bring the Donatists back to the fold.

At first Augustine sought to influence the Donatists by argument. He declared himself eager to confer, but as he evidently looked upon himself as the sole possessor of truth, and upon the Donatists as wandering sheep, conferences were in vain.

When Augustine found that he could not win the Donatists to reunion by the magic of his arguments, he determined to bring them back by force, and encouraged the government to persecute them. Their worship was forbidden, they were ordered to surrender their churches, their clergy were commanded to return to the one true Church. The persecuted Christians appealed to the emperor Honorius in vain. He
412. even issued a decree enacting penalties yet more severe. The Donatists were heavily fined, their property was confiscated, they were scourged and banished. Many yielded, some preferred to endure the loss of all things. Three hundred bishops, and thousands of inferior clergy were driven into exile.

The persecution of the Donatists was no whit less bitter than the Huguenot persecution of later date. And what was the result? The triumph, doubtless, of the Catholic Church? No; but the destruction of Christianity in North Africa. This Christianity, which in the days of Augustine had such a hold on Africa that thousands of clergy could be driven out of one section of the Church, where is it to-day? It is represented by a handful of foreign missionaries surrounded by the

hardest and most uncompromising hostility to Christianity that the world can show. For this lamentable result Augustine must take a large share of blame. Had the bishop of Hippo refrained from beating his fellow-servants, and devoted his extraordinary powers to the evangelisation of Africa, it might not have become the dark continent which it has been from that day to this. It is sad to find so good a man as Augustine advocating coercion in religious matters and defending his position by sophistry. It is the more sad to know that his sanction of persecution became a precedent of great authority in the Catholic Church, and led to a vast amount of spiritual despotism and intolerance. Even the inquisition may be said to have been the legitimate result of Augustinian teaching.

Whilst the Donatist controversy was in progress Augustine threw himself also into the Pelagian. The doctrines of Pelagius are as old as the Church, and will remain while there is a Church, but they came prominently into notice at this time.

Pelagius was a Briton, perhaps a Welshman from Bangor university. The name has the same significance as Morgan, sea-born.

At the end of the fourth century Pelagius went to Rome, and was greatly shocked at the condition of the Christian Church in that city, and at the inconsistent lives which professing Christians, whether lay or clerical, were leading. Perceiving that this arose, to some extent at least, from the idea many had that if they were connected by baptism with the Christian Church they were secure, he took up the attitude of the Apostle James, and emphasised the necessity there was for manifesting faith by the performance of works. Pelagius also insisted on the freedom of man's will as a primary factor in the problem. He had many followers, among whom Cælestius, a native of Ireland, was the most prominent.

After the sack of Rome by Alaric, Pelagius went to Pales- 410.
tine and Cælestius to Carthage. Both men were tried for

heresy. There was little in the charges formulated against them that would shock modern theologians, but the fight spread and waxed fierce, until it shook the Western Church. There were other issues, but the fundamental question was between Free Will and Predestination. Pelagius emphasised man's side of the redemptive scheme, Augustine and those who were with him emphasised God's side. Both went to extremes, and were partly right and partly wrong. The Pelagians were in danger of losing sight of the absolute need for the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, the others were foolish enough to imagine that they could reduce the eternal decrees of God to a formula.

Referring to Augustine's teaching in this matter, Canon Mozley has well said:—

"If revelation as a whole does not speak explicitly, revelation did not intend to do so; and to impose a definite truth upon it when it designedly stops short of one, is as real an error of interpretation as to deny a truth which it expresses".

The emperor Honorius at length interposed in the argument, declared the Pelagians to be heretics, and subjected them to pains and penalties in the usual way. Pelagius, Cælestius and their adherents were banished.

429. The last days of Augustine's life were stormy enough. The Northern tribes had devastated the empire, and the Vandals had crossed from Spain and were overrunning Northern Africa. The Catholics now experienced some of the miseries which they had so wantonly inflicted on their brethren. Many refugees came to Hippo, where Augustine dwelt, and his house was open to all. Then Hippo itself was besieged. In the third month of the siege he was seized with fever, and after a short illness he died, being then seventy-six years of age.

Augustine was the last bishop of Hippo, and with him set the sun of the African Church. At the time of the Vandal conquest there were in the province 500 Catholic bishops; thirty years after only three remained. Had the Church

leaders of Augustine's time shown greater wisdom, and been content to preach the Gospel instead of embarking in a pitiless crusade against the Puritan section of their Church, the result might have been very different. The Vandals were not averse to Christianity. They carried with them and regarded with superstitious awe the Bible, which had been translated into the Gothic tongue by Ulfilas, their great apostle. But the best Christians had been driven out of Africa, and those who remained melted away in the hour of trial.

Augustine was a voluminous writer and had a clear and acute intellect. The influence of his writings was immense and lasting, and many good men have greatly admired him. Luther declared himself deeply indebted to him; Calvin called him the best of the Fathers. Concerning the importance of Augustine's writings as a formative influence in the Catholic Church there can be no question. Whether we think that this mighty influence was for good or evil will depend upon our point of view. Those who are inclined towards high Catholic doctrine, who believe in the exaltation of the authority of the visible Church, the concentration of that authority in the Roman See, the doctrine of Purgatory, with its corollary of prayer for the dead, and who hold strong views with regard to the efficacy of the Sacraments, will find much to gratify them in the writings of Augustine. Strangely enough also the hyper-Calvinist will find in Augustine an important ally. But those of a simpler turn of mind, who believe that "the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart," will have more difficulty in arriving at a favourable verdict. For ourselves we think that Augustine as a writer has had wide influence. But he was not a great man and he was not a saint.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ALARIC THE GOTH.

395. WHEN Theodosius died, leaving Honorius, a child of eleven, nominal ruler of the West, and Arcadius, eighteen years of age, ruler of the East, he had two friends on whom he could implicitly rely, Ambrose, bishop of Milan, and Stilicho, his principal minister of State. To these he left the guardianship of his sons. Ambrose died within two years, but Stilicho lived, and was faithful to his trust.

Probably Theodosius desired that Stilicho should have a general guardianship over both princes, but this was not possible. He was prefect of the West, and could control Honorius, but Rufinus, another important minister, was prefect of the East, and Arcadius was under his control. The West gladly accepted Stilicho's regency, but he was viewed with suspicion and animosity at Constantinople.

Stilicho was a Vandal, son of a chieftain who had been in the service of Valens. He had early attracted the attention of Theodosius, both by reason of his capacity and his princely bearing, and he had been permitted to marry Serena, niece of the emperor. His position at the court of Honorius continued extremely honourable. Honorius, whilst still a boy, married his daughter Maria, and when Maria died he married Thermantia, her sister.

Whilst Theodosius was alive Stilicho became commander-in-chief, and at his death he commanded the united forces of the empire, both the Eastern and Western armies, of which the former was largely Gothic, the latter German and Frank. When the emperor died and the empire fell into two parts Stilicho remained general of the united forces.

When Theodosius marched against Eugenius, his Gothic auxiliaries were commanded by Alaric, a Christian, and a Visigothic chieftain of great distinction. After the emperor's death Stilicho, the Vandal, and Alaric, the Goth, were the most powerful men in the empire.

When Theodosius had passed away and the empire fell into the hands of young and, as it happened, unpopular princes, the Goths became restless. They wished no ill to the empire, but they thought that they had fought Rome's battles long enough and that it was time they looked after their own affairs. Accordingly they elected Alaric as king, and he set about endeavouring to further the interests of his people.

Alaric stationed himself with his followers in the mountains of Illyricum, and from this point of vantage invaded Macedonia and threatened Greece. Arcadius could do nothing against him, for the forces of the Eastern Empire were in the West under Stilicho. Arcadius therefore had to request Stilicho either to come to his defence or to return the Eastern troops, and Stilicho hastened eastward with his united army. But when he had almost reached Thessalonica and would have given Alaric battle, the court at Constantinople, fearing Stilicho more than they feared Alaric, ordered him to desist from further advance, to withdraw with the legions of Honorius and to send the Eastern section of the army to Constantinople. Stilicho obeyed, and the Eastern army marched away under their general, Gainas, a Goth. But Gainas was a great friend of Stilicho, and when the troops reached Constantinople they murdered Rufinus, the chief minister of Arcadius, whom they blamed for the withdrawal.

The following year Alaric invaded Southern Greece and 396.
ravaged the country. With Athens he dealt gently, but Corinth, Argos and Sparta fell before him. Stilicho equipped a fleet and carried the army of the Western Empire across to Corinth. There he encountered Alaric, and skilfully drove him back into the mountains about Elis. But when he seemed to have him at his mercy Alaric escaped across the Gulf into Epirus. Un-

doubtedly Alaric and he were in negotiation. Stilicho respected the Gothic king, and believed that he might some day in the future serve the empire as he had served it in the past. Alaric also had a high regard for Stilicho, though he felt bound to place the interests of his own people first.

Alaric wanted certain provinces set apart for his people, and wished also to receive a grant of money for them from the empire. If he could obtain these favours he would be the empire's faithful ally. Stilicho, on the other hand, wished to maintain the integrity of the Western Empire, to increase its area if possible, and to infuse new blood into it by absorbing barbarians. Both Stilicho and Alaric were statesmen.

As Arcadius found that he could not check the devastations of Alaric he came to terms with him, entering into an agreement by which Alaric was made commander of the forces in Illyricum. This gave him a splendid vantage ground. It was actually as a Roman officer that Alaric prepared his troops for the campaigns which ended in the fall of Rome.

Rome was now of little consequence politically. Except in a sentimental sense it was no longer the capital. Diocletian had been the first to realise that the world could no longer be ruled from an Italian city. He had parceled out the empire amongst four persons, of whom not one dwelt in Rome. Shortly after that the building of Constantinople had practically assured the permanent division of the empire. The chief of the State was no longer necessarily even an Italian. Dalmatia, Illyria, Pannonia, Moesia, Spain, Phœnicia and other provinces had supplied their quota to the imperial throne. Few of the later emperors had any connection with the ancient capital, some had never seen it.

Honorius visited Rome sometimes, but was mostly at Milan, and in 402 he took up his residence permanently at Ravenna. Whilst he was at Milan the empire was threatened on two sides by barbarians. Alaric descended into Venetia from the East, and Radagasius, an Ostrogoth, acting probably in concert, invaded Italy from the North.

The news of this double invasion created a panic in Italy. Honorius and the Italian nobles around him proposed to fly to Gaul. But Stilicho's heart did not fail him. Alaric was engaged reducing the fortresses of Venetia, and this gave Stilicho 410.
a breathing space. Dealing with Radagasius first he went northward to Rætia, gathered forces, and in a winter campaign drove the invaders across the border. Having then reinforced his army by enlisting friendly tribes and drawing in legions from the frontiers he was ready to deal with Alaric.

The rival forces met at Pollentia, about twenty miles from 402.
Turin. Alaric was taken at a disadvantage, and though the battle was not decisive the Goths were discouraged and willing to negotiate. Stilicho was wise enough to offer easy terms, and a treaty was entered into. The Goths then retired in leisurely fashion, nor did Alaric again invade Italy until Stilicho was dead.

Honorius and Stilicho celebrated a triumph at Rome for 404.
this somewhat shadowy victory over the Goths. The occasion is noteworthy, because tradition has it that an Eastern monk named Telemachus interfered between the combatants at the gladiatorial games. It is said that he was slain but that the gladiatorial spectacles ceased. Such an incident may well have happened and may have had its effect, but there were gladiatorial games some years after this.

Next year Radagasius again invaded Italy. His forces went 405.
in different directions. One large body marched towards Rome, but Stilicho succeeded in hemming them in amongst the mountains near Florence. There they were starved into surrender. Many were sold into slavery. Radagasius was put to death. Another section of the invading force pressed on through Gaul, crossed the Pyrenees and entered Spain.

It seemed almost as if Alaric and Radagasius had failed in their attempts upon Italy. But the indirect effect of the invasions was great. In order that he might successfully encounter them Stilicho had denuded the Rhine of troops and had even brought a legion from Britain. The pressure of the

tribes upon the Rhine provinces was always great, and now the Vandals, Sueves and Alans began to pour into Gaul, a province which was never again effectively controlled by the empire.

In Britain also there was a serious change. The soldiers
407. there, perceiving how weak Honorius was, mutinied and elected one of their number named Constantine to the purple. Constantine crossed with most of the troops into Gaul, where he
409. was well received. In a short time he withdrew all the Roman troops from Britain. Nine years later a contingent was sent across at the earnest entreaty of the inhabitants, but they only stayed for a brief space. Thus Britain fell entirely from Rome, and Gaul and Spain ceased to be any source of strength.

Though these results seemed to flow from the invasions of Alaric and Radagasius, they were really inevitable. The Western Empire was played out. Italy could now barely defend herself. Not that the empire dissolved at once. At the death of Honorius in 423 only Britain had formally broken loose. But in many other places the emperor's authority was only nominal. Throughout Gaul and Spain the tribes were settling freely. They had come to stay.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the tribes now pouring into the empire wished it harm. It is scarcely possible for us to realise the position which Rome occupied in the minds of men at this time. It had lasted for a thousand years, it embraced the civilised world, it was a sort of terrestrial providence.

"When Rome, the head of the world, shall have fallen," writes Lactantius, "who can doubt that the end is come of human things; aye, of the earth itself. She, she alone is the State by which all things are upheld even until now."

The barbarians did not desire to destroy Rome. Many of them were already Roman citizens, and the others wished to be. The movements which in their result disintegrated the empire were colonising movements caused by the land hunger of the tribes and the ambition of their leaders. The peoples

knew that the lands of the empire were only half occupied, their kinsfolk were already prospering in the empire; why should not they?

In earlier days the Romans thought it good policy to kill or drive back the immigrants. When they found that they were not strong enough to do this, they thought it a clever thing to foment quarrels between the tribes in order that they might slay each other. This way of dealing with immigration was no longer possible. The native population had decayed in numbers, wealth and spirit. There were not enough natives to man the ramparts. It was no more possible for the Roman in the fifth century to say "Stand back" to the invading tribes than it would be in the twentieth for the native-born American to order back the wave of immigration which sweeps over his country and will sweep over it until it is adequately peopled.

We have seen how Alaric, after crossing swords with Stilicho at Pollentia, returned to Illyricum, keeping the peace for the moment but ready for anything that might occur. He corresponded with Stilicho, who would gladly have utilised him in an attempt to detach Illyricum from the dominions of Arcadius and to add it to those of Honorius. But other matters claimed Stilicho's attention, and he was never able to carry out his plans. In connection with these plans Alaric performed certain services for which he claimed payment. The emperor and Senate met at Rome to discuss the claim and it was paid, 408.
though grudgingly. The payments to Alaric, the loss of Gaul, and the revolt in Britain made Stilicho unpopular. He was a Vandal, and the Roman party had many grievances against him. The power had passed from their hands, and they saw Goth and Vandal everywhere usurping the offices which they formerly monopolised. Accordingly they banded themselves into a conspiracy to destroy Stilicho.

At this juncture Arcadius died leaving one son, Theodosius, a mere child. His wife Eudoxia, whom we have already had occasion to mention in connection with the life of Chrysostom

had died in 404. Honorius proposed to go to Constan to assume guardianship of his nephew, but Stilicho dete to go instead. This was a mistake. No sooner had parted than his enemies declared to Honorius that he to put his own son Eucherius upon the Eastern throne. rius believed it and issued the warrant for his executi Stilicho was overtaken at Ravenna and slain.

The death of Stilicho gave the Roman party a mon triumph. They lost their heads in their exultation ar sacred his friends. They went farther, and with co spite massacred the wives and children of such ba auxiliaries as were with the army. As a result 30,000 aries left the Roman standards, joined Alaric and cr for vengeance.

Alaric knew that in Stilicho he had lost a good frien gallant enemy. But he did not desire war, and he off serve Honorius on fair terms. Accordingly he sent gers with proposals, but Honorius, now back in Raven safe behind its fortifications, refused to treat.

Seeing that negotiation was useless, Alaric cros Julian Alps once more and descended into the plain. and Ravenna he passed by, determined to waste no upon smaller sieges. Crossing the Po and marching wi rapidity he was soon in front of Rome.

The citizens of Rome, panic-stricken, could think of better to do than to murder Serena, the widow of Stili Eucherius his son.

Alaric attempted no assault, he merely blockaded so that provisions could not enter. The result was doubtful. For a brief space the citizens hoped that would help them, but when no help came and fam pestilence pressed heavily they begged for terms.

When the Roman ambassadors in their usual fashi to use swelling words Alaric laughed at them. They numerous, they said, and prepared for war. "Thick easier to mow than thin," he replied. When he dema

their gold, all their silver, all their treasure as the price of peace, they cried in horror, "What shall we have left?" "Saivalos," he replied, "your souls." At length, however, he accepted easier terms, and the first siege of Rome was over.

After the settlement Alaric did not return to Illyricum for he was needed to keep down insurrection in Italy. After the siege thousands of slaves fled from Rome and wandered about in armed bands pillaging the country. Alaric repressed these with a strong hand. The Romans seeing how useful he might be as a protector would fain have made treaty with him. Alaric was willing, but Honorius refused to sanction such a proceeding.

When Alaric found that no proposals of his, however moderate, were listened to by Honorius, and that he turned a deaf ear to the appeals of the citizens of Rome themselves, he determined to teach him a lesson, and sat down to besiege Rome a second time. But the Romans dreaded another blockade and proposed to Alaric that Honorius should be left out of their calculations and another emperor appointed in Rome. Alaric agreed, and Attalus, prefect of Rome, became emperor, with Alaric as his commander-in-chief. But the new arrangement did not last. Attalus was as foolish in his way as Honorius, and at last Alaric thrust him aside. Once more he renewed his overtures to Honorius, and when the conferences failed he marched southward in grim earnest to the sack of Rome.

Only meagre details remain to us of this siege. There was 410.
apparently no blockade, and no serious effort to defend the city. Towards the end of August the Goths arrived, and the city fell almost at once. They broke in by the Salarian Gat which stood near the Pincian Hill. Alaric gave his soldier permission to spoil the city but to do no more. Life was to b spared, churches were not to be injured, the right of asylun was to be respected. It would be inconceivable that a city like Rome should be captured and looted without mischie of other sorts being done. The palace of Sallust, whicl

stood near the Salarian Gate, was burned, and no doubt among so many barbarians there were some who defied Alaric's instructions and were guilty of brutality. Nevertheless, it has been conjectured that Rome suffered less from the barbarians in 410 than Paris did from the Commune in 1871.

The fall of Rome was a world-wide object lesson and its moral effect was tremendous. We have in a former chapter quoted the words of Jerome with regard to the catastrophe. The story of the three sieges, the capture and the sack reached him at the same moment in his cell at Bethlehem and created a profound impression. Augustine was scarcely less impressed. There was an outcry against Christianity. Men declared that Rome had fallen because the people had forsaken the gods of their fathers. To refute this theory Augustine was impelled to write the most important of his treatises, *The City of God.*

The Goths only tarried for a few days in Rome. Then with vast spoil and many captives they wended their way southward through Campania into Calabria. There they gathered a fleet intending to cross to Sicily and thence to Africa, pressed probably by want of supplies of corn. But when a portion of the army had embarked a storm arose and there was great damage and loss of life. This delayed matters, and whilst the army still lingered near Reggio, Alaric died.

If the career of the great Goth had been striking his burial was not less so. Fearing lest Italian hands might desecrate the tomb of their hero, the soldiers, with much pains, diverted the river Busento from its channel. In the bed of the river thus dried up they dug a deep grave, and in it, wrapped in rich spoils of Rome, the body of the king was laid. Then they filled the grave, broke down the barrier, and the river rushed over the sepulchre of their king.

One may not perhaps speak of Alaric as a great changer of history. But he stood on guard, a noble and heroic figure, whilst history changed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE BREAKING UP OF THE WEST.

[N a former chapter we saw how Maximus, who was Roman 383.
governor in Britain, was proclaimed emperor by the soldiers. Had he been content to remain in Britain, and govern the island properly, it would have mattered little what name he went by. But not content with the dominion which he might so easily have retained he must needs govern the empire. Accordingly he crossed to Gaul, and when he had obtained possession of it seized Italy. Then came the inevitable reverse and he was slain. But the soldiers whom he had brought from Britain did not return and the garrison was greatly weakened.

We have also seen how some years after this the soldiers 407.
who remained in the island proclaimed one of their number named Constantine emperor. Had he only remained where he was the election might have been a good thing both for Britain and for the empire; but he also must seek wider dominions, so he crossed the channel bringing most of the remaining troops with him. There were now few soldiers left in the island and two years later Constantine withdrew these also. Afterwards when the inhabitants, sorely pressed by the Caledonians, appealed to Honorius for help, he gave them to understand that the empire had enough to do to ward off the attacks of barbarians nearer home, and that they must henceforth provide for their own defence. Thus Britain ceased to form part of the Roman Empire.

Constantine proved a man of capacity, and his usurpation met with a measure of success. He crossed to Gaul, and was well received by the legions there. He also checked for a time the inrush of tribes over the Rhine frontier. Constantine sent

his son Constans into Spain and the young man was successful there and sent back to his father two important Spanish leaders as prisoners of war. Constantine cruelly slew them. In so doing he signed his own death warrant, for they were cousins of Honorius, whose father Theodosius was a Spaniard, and Honorius nursed his revenge.

Having established his court at Arles, Constantine wrote to Honorius, asking to be recognised as joint emperor, and Honorius, sore pressed at this time by Alaric, agreed, and sent him the purple. But the new emperor did not long enjoy his distinction. Gerontius, a British lieutenant of Constantine, mutinied in Spain, drove Constans out, and followed him into Gaul. He captured Vienne, slew Constans and besieged Constantine in Arles.

Seeing that the two usurpers were destroying each other, Honorius sent an army under his general Constantius to win back the Gauls. Constantine was now menaced by two armies. But the soldiers of Gerontius solved one part of the difficulty by deserting their leader and joining the imperial army. Gerontius fled to Spain, and died there by his own hand after fighting like a hero.

Arles held out for some months, but Constantine at last perceived that all was over and surrendered. He was sent as a prisoner to Ravenna, but when thirty miles from the city was executed by orders from Honorius.

On the death of Alaric the Goths, who were then in the most southern part of the peninsula, elected Adolphus, his wife's brother, as king. There was at that time in the Gothic camp a maiden hostage, Placidia, daughter of Theodosius by his second wife Galla, and therefore younger sister of the emperor Honorius. Adolphus fell in love with Placidia, and she with him, but Honorius refused consent to their marriage for four years.

412. The relations between Adolphus and Placidia made the former anxious to be on friendly terms with Honorius, and he drew his followers slowly northward, out of Italy, across the

Alps and into Gaul. Two years after the sack of Rome the Visigothic army of Alaric had left Italy never again to return. Perhaps Gaul seemed a richer prize than Italy, perhaps Adolphus hoped thus to conciliate Honorius and win his bride.

At length Honorius gave his consent to the union and the 414
marriage was solemnised at Narbonne with great splendour. Unhappily the wedded life was very brief. A son was born and named Theodosius after his maternal grandfather. But he died after a few months. His parents grieved greatly over him, and he was buried in a silver coffin at Barcelona, for during these months the Visigoths had crossed the Pyrenees, and they were now in Spain. Unfortunately worse was to follow. Shortly after Adolphus was assassinated by one of his own Gothic servants apparently in revenge.

Adolphus was succeeded by one Singeric, who was privy to the assassination, but when he had reigned for seven days he was himself slain, and Walia, a much better man, was elected king of the Goths.

In accordance with the dying wishes of Adolphus, Placidia was now restored to her brother Honorius, by whom she was received with regal pomp. After a time she married as her second husband Constantius, the general already mentioned, a rough but honourable man. They had two children, the elder a daughter, Honoria, the younger a son, who on the death of his uncle Honorius succeeded to the throne as Valentinian III.

After the Goths had left Italy Honorius helped the people to repair some of their ravages. The portions of Rome which had been destroyed were rebuilt, and in certain provinces the tribute was lightened for a time. The provinces thus favoured were Picenum, Tuscany, Campania, Samnium, Apulia, Calabria, Bruttium and Lucania. The list is interesting, because it shows the path of the invasion. Evidently the greater part of Italy had been traversed by the Gothic army.

Walia began his reign by organising an expedition into Africa, probably in search of corn. He proposed to cross at

Gibraltar, but his ships were shattered by a storm and he abandoned the idea. He then carried the Visigothic arms over Spain, warring with the Sueves, Vandals and Alans who had preceded him. His services to the empire were recognised,
419. and the emperor granted to the Visigoths a permanent home in South-western Gaul. Thus the Visigoths who could find no home in Illyricum or in Italy became established in a spacious province which lay on both sides of the Pyrenees, extending from the Loire to the Straits of Gibraltar. The capital of the province was Tolosa.

During the last years of Honorius the Burgundians obtained the supremacy in Eastern Gaul, the Franks in the North. The Western Empire was now quite broken up. The Franks held the North of France from the Rhine to the Atlantic, with Paris, Orleans, Cologne as their important cities. South of the Franks eastward dwelt the Burgundians with the important city of Geneva. South-west dwelt the Goths, stretching across the Pyrenees and battling with the Vandals and the Alans for Spain. The Suevi were in the North-west corner of the peninsula, the Alans in Portugal, the Vandals in Andalusia.

The Western Empire was now divided up amongst the tribes, but, as we have explained, these were not necessarily hostile to the empire. They rather viewed it with veneration as something without which the world could scarcely hang together. They were willing to perform military service for the emperor and to recognise him as overlord. Their great men aspired to lead the imperial armies, and we shall find that they were soon called upon to take a leading part in saving the empire from the Huns.

It should be carefully remembered that the barbarians, as we must call them for want of a better name, were men in whom the sense of justice was strongly developed. They did not always seize the land which they coveted with the strong hand and eject the owners by force and without compensation. Whenever possible they compensated them, and held themselves bound to them by the ties of hospitality. The tribes

whose very names are synonyms for barbarism, were not the uncouth beings we often imagine them to have been. They were for all practical purposes of the same breed as the Angles and Saxons who invaded our own island, and from whom we are ourselves descended. They brought with them their healthy German habits, their reverence for authority, their ideas concerning the sanctity of the home, their respect for women. There are not very many victorious generals who would have waited four years for the permission of a beaten foe to marry a captive maiden. The old order was changing, the empire was passing away, but something healthier was taking its place. There was hope for the world now that the "barbarians" had conquered Rome.

Four years after his marriage with Placidia Constantius was associated with Honorius on the throne of the West, Placidia receiving the title of Augusta. Constantius only reigned for seven months, long enough, however, to make 421.
him regret that he had exchanged the position of a private gentleman for that of a king.

After her husband's death Placidia's life at Ravenna was not comfortable, so she went with her two children to the court of her nephew, Theodosius II., at Constantinople.

Soon afterwards Honorius died. By some absurd intrigue 423.
an obscure man, Joannes, was raised to the throne. But Theodosius II. interfered on behalf of his cousin, and Joannes was deposed, though not until he had reigned for eighteen months. Placidia's boy succeeded as Valentinian III., and the mother, herself only thirty-five, acted as regent. Placidia ruled the Western Empire for twenty-five years, first as regent for her son and afterwards as his adviser. The capital continued to be at Ravenna, which abounds in interesting memorials of her reign.

Placidia had the misfortune to add Africa to the list of provinces which had already fallen from the Western Empire. Its loss came about in this wise. The queen had two generals, Bonifacius and Ætius. They were brave and able men but

jealous of one another. It has been said that either man could by himself have saved the empire, but together they destroyed it.

Boniface first comes into notice in 412 when he repelled an assault of the Goths under Adolphus upon Marseilles. Afterwards he went to Africa and became governor of that province. He was loyal to the house of Theodosius and had a most honourable reputation.

Ætius had led a somewhat exciting and changeful career but entered the service of Placidia in Ravenna and became count of Italy and her chief adviser. Jealous of the high regard which his royal mistress had for Boniface, Ætius plotted against him, so misrepresenting matters to him that Boniface believed the queen meant to have his life; and so misrepresenting matters to Placidia that she believed that Boniface contemplated rebellion. Deeming himself in imminent danger Boniface sought help from the Vandals, who, at that time were struggling with the Visigoths in the Spanish
429. Peninsula and not holding their own. Glad of the diversion the Vandals crossed to Africa under Gaiseric their king. The Spaniards furthered their departure by lending them ships, and Gaiseric crossed with all his followers, their families and their goods.

Scarcely had the Vandals arrived in Africa, when Boniface found that he had been the victim of a plot and deceived about the feelings and intentions of Placidia. He now eagerly entreated the Vandals to return to Spain, making magnificent promises. But they laughed at his promises, for Northern Africa was fair, and in any case their return was for ever impossible.

432. Boniface had accordingly no help for it but to oppose the men whom he had invited to be his allies. But they were too strong for him, and at last, utterly beaten, he fled to Italy. Placidia received him kindly, but he engaged in a duel with Ætius and was mortally wounded.

The treachery of Ætius displeased Placidia, and for a time

he was under a cloud. But he was too powerful to be set aside, and he was restored to power and was her chief minister for the last seventeen years of her reign.

Meanwhile the Vandals ravaged the African province. Their task was easy because for some time the province had been disintegrated and torn asunder by the persecution of the Donatists. Many indeed looked upon the Vandal incursion as a direct visitation from the Almighty, a judgment upon the Catholics for their cruel treatment of their Christian brethren. We have already dealt with this in our sketch of the life of Augustine and have seen how he died whilst the Vandals were besieging Hippo, the seat of his bishopric.

The Vandals did not spare the country, and it was impossible for the empire to render effective help. Carthage held out for some years, but at length surrendered, and with its fall the African province was finally severed from the empire.

The city of Rome felt the loss of Africa most keenly of all. 440.
In earlier times her corn supply had come chiefly from Egypt, but for centuries Africa had been her granary. That the country from which she drew her food supply should be in the hands of enemies was indeed serious. As a consequence the population of Rome which had increased again after the death of Alaric began rapidly to fall. The city had never been self-sufficing, nor had it paid for its food by honest labour. Great numbers of its citizens were little better than paupers, depending upon imperial doles. For this class there was now little room in Rome.

Strangely enough there were still families in Rome possessed of vast wealth. We have it on record that some families had revenues of £200,000 per annum. Families with only £50,000 per annum were considered of the second rank. These huge incomes were not the product of legitimate industry, but were acquired from huge monopolies of land, of house property and of slave labour.

Placidia died at Rome in the sixtieth year of her age. That 450.
year the imperial court had been removed from Ravenna to

Rome, but Placidia's remains were carried back to Ravenna. By some strange fancy her embalmed body was set upright in a chair in the mausoleum, arrayed in royal robes. So it remained for a thousand years, the most extraordinary sight in Ravenna. Unhappily, in 1577, an accident happened, the robes caught fire, and in a few minutes only a handful of ashes remained.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ATTILA THE SCOURGE.

We have seen how the Northern races of Europe gradually encroached upon the Southern until they had vanquished them so far that they could settle almost where they liked within the empire. In this contest European vanquished European, and though the victors may not have been so highly cultured in some respects as the vanquished, they had many good qualities and were superior in many ways to the races among whom they settled. The triumph of the Teutons was a blessing to Europe.

But scarcely had the new-comers become thoroughly settled in their holdings when a dark cloud arose in the East, threatening a storm which seemed likely to engulf both victors and vanquished. This new danger came from the Huns, a nationality belonging to the Turanian or Tartar race.

It is not known with certainty how the Huns first came to Europe, but Chinese history gives us a clue. From it we learn that the region between Turkestan and the Chinese frontier, north of Tibet, and now spoken of as Mongolia, was in early times inhabited by a nomadic race called the Hiong-Nu. Even before the Christian era the Chinese had fought continually against this people, and the great wall of China, 1,500 miles in length, was built to guard Eastern China from the Hiong-Nu or Hun.

Early in the Christian era the Huns broke in twain, and one section of them allied themselves with the Chinese empire, whilst the others wandered towards Europe. The old barbarian empire of the Hiong-Nu came to an end, and such of the Huns as were dissatisfied with Chinese suzerainty migrated

westward and settled round the Caspian and the Sea of Azof, in the regions watered by the Ural, Volga and Don.

For nearly three centuries the Huns made little stir. Probably they longed for the East whence they had come, but warlike races of their own breed now filled the regions their forefathers had abandoned, and return was impossible. As therefore they increased in numbers and got back the old fighting spirit, they moved westward.

The regions beyond the Rhine and the Danube, which lay between the empire and the Huns, were inhabited by the Teutonic tribes, of whom so much has already been said, who had swarmed down from the shores of the Baltic. They also were great fighters, and the Huns for a long time hesitated to meddle with them. But as time went on the Goths settled down to peaceful pursuits and prospered, and the Huns, who preferred a wandering life, began to raid their more wealthy neighbours.

Those who have seen Tartars can imagine the dread with which the Teutons first beheld this strange-looking race that had fallen upon them. When the Tartar countenance becomes familiar it is pleasing enough, but at first it strangely repels. When, therefore, in the fourth century the Huns pressed westward, many of the Teutons, rather than live with this new and, as they thought, loathsome people, determined to migrate. In a former chapter we saw how when the Ostrogoths had been defeated by the Huns and they were pressing forward upon the Visigoths, the latter besought Valens to let them enter the empire. We have also seen how he assented, and what important results followed. This was in the Danubian provinces, but farther north in the Rhine provinces the Teutons also crossed in great numbers about this time, and settled in Gaul and Spain.

By the Teutonic migrations some part of Eastern Europe was left derelict, and the Huns flocked in until their leaders became supreme through the regions lying beyond the Rhine and Danube, from the Baltic even to the Black Sea. For a

me they were content with this eastern sovereignty, and left
ıe empire undisturbed, some of them even serving as auxili-
ies in the imperial armies. But gradually they began to
alise their own strength and Rome's weakness, and then
ıeir tactics changed.

Early in the fifth century, Rugila, king of the Huns,
aimed lordship over all Europe east of the Danube. When
ome made alliance with some Danubian tribes whom he
aimed as subjects, he threatened war and was only pacified on
ceiving tribute from Theodosius II.

Rugila died and was succeeded by his nephews, Attila and 433.
leda. They reigned unitedly for twelve years, then Bleda
ed and Attila reigned alone. Attila was neither a great
eneral nor a hero. He was merely a fighter and a bully, and
e ruled by terror. He was a land pirate and might fitly have
ught under the black flag. But his style suited the Huns
d they flocked to his standard until he could put half a
illion fierce and unscrupulous warriors into the field.

At the time when Rugila died an embassy was on its way
him from Theodosius. Many deserters had fled from his
oke and taken refuge in the empire. Rugila demanded their
rrender, and Theodosius sent ambassadors to discuss the
estion. Attila met them and entered into an agreement
which the tribute promised by Theodosius was doubled.

During the following seven years Attila carried his arms
er Eastern Europe. Opposition to such a man with such an
my seemed futile, and he terrorised Europe as far as the
uyder Zee. Some think that the considerable migration of
ngles and Saxons to Britain at this time may have been
used in part by their desire to escape from the hordes of
ttila.

Attila's personal dominions were in Hungary, and his bar-
ric capital was situated in the neighbourhood of Buda Pesth.
ough the name Hungary is suggestive, and though traces
Tartar origin are not wholly absent from the people, the
nnection of the modern Hungarian with the Hun is remote.

The Hungarians of the present day derive their origin rather from the Turks or Magyars who occupied Hungary towards the end of the ninth century.

441. At last Attila fell foul of the Eastern Empire. The bishop of Margus had madly crossed the Danube on a maraudin[g] expedition and robbed a treasure house of the Huns. Atti[la] demanded his surrender, and, seeing that this was imminen[t], the bishop determined to anticipate matters, crossed to Atti[la] and treacherously offered to put him in possession of the ci[ty] of Margus if he would spare his life. Attila agreed, the Hu[ns] crossed and Margus was destroyed.

447. Some years later Attila, now sole ruler of the Huns, invad[ed] the Eastern Empire in force, defeated such armies as were se[nt] against him, and ravished Thrace, even to the walls of Co[n]stantinople. Anatolius, a Roman of high rank, went to h[is] camp to negotiate peace. He got peace, but on hard terms. the yearly tribute, which had been doubled by Attila, was no[w] trebled, and a huge sum had to be paid down as compensatio[n] before the Huns would retire. The raising of these sums [of] money from an already impoverished people caused great suffe[r]ing in the Eastern Empire. Torture was sometimes resorte[d] to by the revenue officers in order to compel payment of t[he] assessed taxes.

Perceiving the abject condition of the court at Constan[ti]tinople Attila took full advantage of his opportunity, sendi[ng] ambassadors quarterly and extorting money on the most ridic[u]lous pretexts. In order to get rid of the robber a plot w[as] hatched at Constantinople against his life, but he discovered i[t] and war was only averted by humble apologies and rich gifts.

450. When Theodosius II. died he left no son, and he was succeeded by his sister Pulcheria, who married Marcian, a noble. Pulcheria and her consort determined not to yield as tamely to Attila as Theodosius had done, and withheld the tribute. Attila blustered, but they were firm, and he, perceiving that affairs in Constantinople were being managed in a different way, and perhaps knowing also that there was little

more to be gathered from the East in any case, now turned his attention towards the Western Empire.

Valentinian III. ruled at Ravenna, with Ætius as his prime minister. Ætius had been a friend of the former king of the Huns and had even utilised the services of the Huns in his own interests. But he had nothing to gain by helping Attila, and he did his very best for Italy and Valentinian.

After several insulting messages had been received from Attila it became evident that he intended to attack the empire, and Ætius prepared for a very serious conflict. The Italians were not fit to cope with the Huns by themselves, and had Attila invaded Italy at once the result might have been fatal. Fortunately for Europe he took Gaul first. He had some idea that he would obtain allies in Gaul. The Alans who dwelt round Valence and were themselves of Turanian origin had been in correspondence with him and he hoped that they would fight on his side. He therefore determined to invade the empire by way of Gaul.

More than half Gaul was now governed by Teutonic races, the Franks, the Burgundians and the Visigoths. The last named, whose settlements lay on the Bay of Biscay and stretched, as we have seen, across the Pyrenees into Spain, were the most important. Theodoric, their king, was popular and warlike, so also was Thorismond, his son. But whether they would rise at Rome's bidding to defend the empire remained to be seen.

Recognising the importance of dividing his foes Attila sent two embassies, one to Theodoric, one to Valentinian. To Theodoric he professed to come as a deliverer, and entreated him to rise against the Romans, the enemies of his people. To Valentinian he sent an embassy declaring that he only desired to punish his old enemies the Goths. Of course he deceived neither, and both armed for the fray. Ætius got together such forces as he could command with all speed, but the Goths were slow to move, nor did they actually take the field until the tide of battle threatened their borders.

451. Attila moved westward with an innumerable host. His troops crossed the Rhine in two sections, half near its mouth, half in the neighbourhood of Strasbourg. City after city fell, and soon all Gaul north of the Seine was a desert.

When they had sacked many cities the Huns reached Orleans (Aureliani), an important city belonging to the Franks but near the territory of the Visigoths. Anianus, the bishop of the city, anticipated the siege and resolved to make a stout defence. He visited Ætius at Arles, and stipulated that relief should come at latest before 24th June. Then he returned to the city, and inspired his people to vigorous resistance. Ætius did his best to hasten matters, but the promised day had arrived before the relieving army reached the city, a breach had been made, and the Huns were fighting their way in. At this critical moment the relieving forces arrived, and the besieging party were driven from the city with great loss.

Attila knew now that he had men to deal with, and realising that a serious defeat in the middle of Gaul would mean destruction, he retired Rhineward for a hundred miles until he reached the plain in which the city of Troyes now stands. Near this city, at a place now called Mery-sur-Seine, a battle big with fate was fought. Both sides realised the importance of the struggle.

Attila showed little generalship. He commanded the Hun centre, and threw himself with all his might on the centre of his foe. He succeeded in breaking through, but this proved of little consequence. His enemies were fighting in two sections in any case, on the right, King Theodoric with his Visigoths, on the left, Ætius with the Romans. The centre was their weakest point, for there they had placed the Alans in whom they had little confidence. The Visigoths were confused for a moment by the flight of the Alans, and then, regaining confidence, rushed upon the Huns with the utmost intrepidity. Ætius also did his part. Both wings of the Huns were beaten, and then the forces so pressed on the centre that Attila had much ado to fight his way back to camp, where, sheltered by

the waggons, his forces rallied. The slaughter was terrific, about three hundred thousand were slain. So numerous were the forces and so widely spread was the fighting, that Thorismond and Ætius lost their way and knew not how the battle had sped until morning, when they also learned the sad news that Theodoric the king of the Goths had fallen.

Next day Attila clung to his camp, and it was evident that, though not utterly defeated, he had received a repulse which made his retreat inevitable. Thorismond and Ætius therefore determined not to imperil the success they had attained by storming the camp. Thorismond, chosen king on the field of battle, hurried to Toulouse, his capital, to make his succession sure, and Ætius drew back and watched the foe. Attila was astonished at not being attacked, and Ætius has been blamed for not attacking him; but he knew his own business best. The Hunnish force was still immense, and the force which had defeated them was small in comparison. It was better to let well alone.

As for Attila, this serious check left him no alternative. Thankful to be allowed to retire in peace he recrossed the Rhine and returned to his home in Hungary. He had been well beaten, and knew that the Goths were his masters. He determined that next time he would invade Italy and leave the others severely alone.

Next year Attila again took the field, and having crossed 452.
the Julian Alps laid siege to Aquileia. This important city, which had already successfully resisted many invaders, made a stubborn defence. When at last it fell it was abandoned to the rage and lust of the Tartar horde, and then levelled with the ground. Henceforth the city virtually disappears from history.

After the fall of Aquileia the invading host spread over the plains of Venetia and Lombardy, ravaging the country and destroying city after city. When at length the cities ceased to resist and opened their gates on his approach, Attila spared the buildings but looted the cities and carried their inhabitants into slavery.

It is contended by some that the first inhabitants of the islands on which Venice is built may have been fugitives from Aquileia and other cities which Attila destroyed. The idea is picturesque and may be true. But Venice did not become of commercial importance for some centuries after this time.

When the valley of the Po had been wasted, the invaders halted, doubtful whether to march upon Rome or not. Valentinian and Ætius had retired to that city from Ravenna. The Roman court, taking advantage of the breathing space, sent an embassy to treat with the Hun. The chief ambassador was the bishop of Rome, Pope Leo I., a man of high character and stately presence. He met Attila on the banks of the Mincio, and made so favourable an impression upon the barbarian that he promised to return home and henceforth live at peace with the Romans. Apparently Attila's officers counselled moderation, and it is not unlikely that the Huns had gathered as much booty as they could conveniently carry and were anxious to convey it safely home.

453. A few months after his return to Hungary Attila died in his bed, suffocated by breaking an artery in a drunken fit.

Attempts have been made to compare Attila with other military conquerors. But there are few important names known to history that would not be insulted by the comparison. Men have fought for conquest, country, plunder, love of fighting. Attila ravened like a mad beast from mere lust of blood. Through terror a vast tract of country submitted to his will, but he attempted no government and organised no empire. When he died no loyal band of followers rallied round his offspring. His empire died with him. Men awoke as if from a nightmare and thanked God that a new day had dawned.

CHAPTER XL.

THE VANDALS.

THE death of Attila was followed by the dissolution of his 453.
empire. He left heirs indeed, several sons of suitable age, who proceeded to divide their father's empire between them. But the empire declined to recognise them. Attila's influence had been purely personal. Surrounded by a multitude of unscrupulous warriors he had crushed out opposition in Eastern Europe and compelled obedience. The tribes thought it better to submit than to be destroyed, better to plunder with Attila than be plundered by him.

Of the tribes who had joined the confederacy some were Teutons, some were Huns. Between these races there had never been any love lost, and the great battle in Gaul had not improved their relationship. When, therefore, Attila's personal influence was removed they fell into two camps and were speedily at one another's throats.

A battle was fought in Hungary, and the Huns were de- 454.
feated. Thirty thousand were slain, amongst whom was Ellak, Attila's first-born. Thus weakened the Huns lost confidence and retired across Dacia and the Carpathians to the regions in Southern Russia whence they had issued three centuries before. The Huns never again appeared as a separate nation to trouble Europe, but we find the same wild spirit and the same daring horsemanship amongst the Cossacks, a mixed race but having much Tartar blood.

Whilst Attila terrorised Europe, Ætius, Rome's one general since Stilicho, was indispensable. He gained great influence, and therefore also raised up for himself many enemies. Amongst these was Valentinian III., the emperor, a small-

minded man, jealous of his minister, and easily persuaded that he had revolutionary designs. With the help of Heraclius, another minister who was jealous of Ætius, he enticed him into the palace without an escort and slew him with his own hand. A few months later Valentinian and Heraclius were themselves assassinated, and Ætius was avenged.

Valentinian III. left no son, and with him the house of Theodosius became extinct. Maximus, a distinguished senator of advanced years, was chosen by the army and people as emperor. Maximus did not reign wisely, and soon lost his popularity. Hoping to better consolidate his power he endeavoured to persuade Eudoxia, the widow of Valentinian, to marry him, but she refused. He was twice her age, and she may have suspected him of complicity in the murder of her husband, though this is unlikely. The story goes that, enraged at his importunity, Eudoxia invited the Vandals to invade Italy, and that Gaiseric came at her invitation. It is true that three months after the death of Valentinian III. an immense Vandal fleet under Gaiseric appeared off Ostia, the port of Rome. But though Eudoxia may have looked upon the coming of the Vandals with equanimity she could have had nothing to do with the expedition. An expedition of such magnitude must have been long in preparation, and the entire reign of Maximus only extended over three months.

Doubtless from the time when Attila made so easy a conquest of Northern Italy, but left Rome untouched, Gaiseric had his eye upon that city. When Attila died he probably began to prepare. Then came news of the murder of Ætius, the only general whom he had to fear. When this was followed by the murder of Valentinian Gaiseric knew that the hour had come.

That we may better understand the events which follow, it is desirable that we should recall the main facts about the Vandals.

The Vandals had come from Northern Germany like the Goths and other Teutonic peoples, they were all of the same

stock and were, in appearance, laws and language closely akin.

In the third century the emperor Aurelian made a treaty with the Vandals by which they promised to supply a stated number of horsemen to the Roman army. They kept their promise, and for a long time there was a Vandal wing in the imperial army. Many Vandals entered the service of the empire in this way, and some rose to distinction. Of these Stilicho was the chief. 271.

Constantine permitted the Vandals to settle in Western Hungary, and they were faithful subjects of the empire. Many of them became Christians, adopting the Arian doctrine which Ulfilas, the great apostle of the Goths, had preached. So greatly did they reverence the memory of Ulfilas that they carried a copy of his Gothic translation of the Scriptures with them in their wanderings, and consulted it as an oracle when perplexed. 330.

Early in the fifth century the tribes began to pour into Gaul, and a confederacy of Vandals, Sueves and Alans crossed the Rhine. They fought their way southwards through Gaul, crossed the Pyrenees, and entered Spain. 406.

Some years later the Visigoths also crossed the Pyrenees under Adolphus, and Spain became a battleground for the Teutonic nations. The country suffered terribly, but gradually the tribes settled down, the Sueves in the North-west, the Visigoths in the North-east, the Alans in Portugal, and the Vandals in Andalusia. The Alans, who were of Hunnish extraction, were cut to pieces by the Visigoths, and became so reduced in numbers that they joined the Vandals, and one man was king over both. 414.

We have in a previous chapter seen how count Boniface, alarmed at the threatenings of the court at Ravenna, sought help from the Vandals, and how they crossed to Africa at his request. They were glad to leave Spain, for they were overshadowed by the Visigoths. Gaiseric, king of the Vandals and Alans, gathered his people together, old and young, male and 429.

female, near Gibraltar. They were not very numerous, only 80,000 all told, of whom 20,000 were able to bear arms.

Scarcely had the Vandals landed in Africa when Boniface repented of his rash act and begged them to return, offering bribes. But return was now impossible to them even had they been willing, and they laughed him to scorn.

Though their host was small, the Vandals carried everything before them. Parts of the province had never taken kindly to the Roman yoke, and it is likely that some even joined the invading army. The province also had been rent in twain by religious persecution, and many of those who would under ordinary circumstances have been the invader's strongest foes, looked upon his coming as a relief and did not hinder even if they did not actively help his progress.

Soon Gaiseric had gained all the province except the important cities of Hippo, Cirta and Carthage. He besieged
430. Hippo, where Boniface, the count of Africa, had taken refuge. Hippo was the home of Augustine. He was bishop there, and had a great share of responsibility for the persecutions which had so weakened the province. He and the other bishops were now sore at heart, because they were receiving from the Vandals the measure they had meted out to their brethren. During the siege of Hippo Augustine died.

Gaiseric found that though he could overcome the Romans in the field he could not capture walled cities, so he gave up the attempt. But when the Romans had been reinforced and again defeated, and Boniface had fled to Rome, the imperial court decided to give up the struggle. Peace was accordingly made on the understanding that Hippo should be surrendered to the Vandals and that Carthage should be spared. After a few years, however, Gaiseric captured Carthage, and the Vandals were now masters of the entire province.

Supreme in Africa, Gaiseric soon won for the Vandals the supremacy of the Mediterranean. He built a fine fleet, and for thirty years sailed hither and thither on marauding expeditions. It may have been partly in connection with these

expeditions that the name of Vandal obtained its peculiar significance. But it may also partly have sprung from the religious policy of the Vandals in North Africa. They retaliated upon the orthodox Catholic party for the treatment which the Arians had received from them there and elsewhere throughout the empire. Undoubtedly the Arians had been badly treated. It will be remembered, for instance, that bishop Ambrose refused to allow them a single edifice in Milan where they could worship according to their consciences, and this although many of the soldiers were Arians and the empress herself was an Arian. Similar treatment had been meted out to them wherever the orthodox party had the upperhand. It must be confessed that when the Arians had the advantage they generally showed a similar spirit. They did it now in Africa. The orthodox bishops were persecuted and exiled, and such churches as were not utilised for Arian worship were destroyed.

It is probable also that many of the Donatists, smarting under the recent persecution, made common cause with the Vandals, and took this opportunity of paying some of their persecutors back in their own coin.

But there is no substantial proof that the Vandals were specially cruel, and the association of the word with wanton destructiveness is unjustifiable. The idea that the Vandals were the most fierce of the northern nations is equally incorrect. On the contrary, up to the time of Gaiseric, they were considered the least warlike.

It is interesting to know that the Christians of North Africa had the habit which we generally associate with the Puritans of giving or assuming names in which the name of the Deity appears. One bishop was named Habet-Deum, He has God; another Quod-Vult, What God wills; a third Deogratias, Thanks to God. Augustine's son, it will be remembered, was named A-deo-datus, Given by God. Amongst the Hebrews this practice was very common, and the same is true of the Assyrians and Babylonians. The throne names of

their kings were generally taken in compliment to their patron deity.

455. When the Vandals had been supreme in North Africa for a quarter of a century, and had also become supreme in the Mediterranean, they determined to attack Rome itself. Taking advantage of the unsettled state of the city, when Ætius, the commander-in-chief, and Valentinian III., the emperor, had been murdered, Gaiseric sailed with a formidable armament and suddenly appeared before Ostia.

Rome was panic-stricken, and the people believing themselves betrayed and demanding a victim, slew Maximus, the respectable and unfortunate senator who had been rash enough to ascend the throne. Maximus was no more to blame for the Vandal invasion than any one else, but an emperor has to take his chances.

A few days after the death of Maximus, Gaiseric and his forces appeared before the gates of Rome. Pope Leo I., who had formerly negotiated successfully with Attila, was again in requisition and sent to meet the great Vandal. The Vandals had no special grudge against either Rome or the Romans; they merely wanted plunder. Accordingly the bishop bargained that if the people took peacefully the spoiling of their goods there should be no wanton destruction and no bloodshed. The bargain was hard, but it was the best he could do.

For two weeks the city was searched, systematically and in leisurely fashion, and everything that could be carried and was worth carrying was put on board the fleet. There was no outrage, no massacre, and very little demolition of buildings. But gold, silver, precious stones, and merchandise of every sort was sought out and taken away. The Vandals began stripping the golden roof of a church, but desisted when they found out that it was only copper-gilt.

Perhaps the most interesting of the spoils taken to Africa were the sacred vessels of the Hebrew temple which had been brought from Jerusalem by Titus, and are to be seen depicted upon his arch at Rome. They were now taken to Africa

and kept in the palace. Eighty years after, as we shall see, Belisarius, Justinian's great general, invaded Africa, overcame Gelimer, king of the Vandals, and recovered much treasure, the vessels of the temple amongst the rest.

It would have been well had the Vandals contented themselves with gold and silver. Unfortunately they also carried with them to Africa many captives, both male and female. At last Rome knew something of the bitterness of the draught she had made so many of the nations drink.

The captives were of every rank, from Eudoxia, the empress, with her daughters, downwards. Eudoxia was treated with consideration, and one of her daughters afterwards married Hunneric, the son of Gaiseric. As regards the rest of the captives they were sold as slaves and scattered over North Africa. The bishop of Carthage did what he could to alleviate the miseries of the unfortunates. He turned churches into hospitals, ransomed as far as his means would allow, and endeavoured to keep families from being torn asunder. Rome herself never made any attempt at ransoming on a large scale, and the descendants of the captives must still be numerous in Northern Africa.

Just 600 years had gone by since the Romans, blinded by ignorance and pride, had razed Carthage to the ground, burned its ruins and passed the plough over its site. And now from Carthage issued forth the armament which sacked Rome and carried thousands of her citizens into captivity.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

455. WHEN Gaiseric left Rome the silence of despair fell upon the city. The throne was vacant and no one dared occupy it. At last after a three months interregnum news came from Gaul that Avitus, a nobleman of Auvergne, had assumed the purple at Arles.

Avitus was a good man who had already done the State service. As a boy he lived at Toulouse, and was intimate with the family of the Gothic king. Afterwards he joined the imperial army and served under Ætius. Then he retired to Auvergne and lived privately. When Attila invaded Gaul and Ætius was eager to gain the support of Theodoric, he remembered the old friendship between him and Avitus, and sent the latter as an ambassador to his court. On that occasion Avitus did splendid service by persuading the Goths to enter the alliance by means of which Attila was driven out of Gaul.

Theodoric I. had been succeeded by Thorismund, and he by Theodoric II., who now reigned. The old friendship between Avitus and the Gothic court continued, and when news came that Maximus was dead Theodoric II. advised him to assume the purple, and promised his support. Avitus agreed, the Gauls acquiesced, and Rome accepted the new emperor without demur.

456. There was, however, in the Roman army a general named Ricimer, a man of much ability and ambition. He was Suevian on the paternal side and a grandson of Walia the Goth on the maternal. His sister was married to the king of the Burgundians. Thus he was a man of distinction and influence. Winning an important victory over a Vandal fleet which was

lying off Corsica and seemed to threaten Rome, he became popular, and determined to overthrow Avitus. Avitus saw that he could not successfully oppose him, and abdicated.

Ricimer could now have ascended the throne without difficulty. But he knew the danger of the position and avoided it. He preferred to be king-maker, and as such was virtual head of the commonwealth for sixteen years.

After a short interregnum Ricimer elevated Majorian to 457.
the throne. Majorian was a leading official who had served under Ætius, and had helped Ricimer to overthrow Avitus. For this service he was first made commander-in-chief and then emperor. He was not unworthy of the position. He passed laws against the rapacity of tax-collectors, against illegal exactions by officials, against celibacy and about the currency. He tried to prevent the destruction of historic buildings and ancient monuments. The city officials were pulling these down on the pretext that the stones were wanted for other works, both public and private. Majorian decreed that those who did this should be beaten with clubs and have their hands struck off—"those hands which have defiled the ancient monuments which they ought to have preserved". Those of an antiquarian turn of mind will agree with the edict, though the punishment may have been somewhat severe. Some of the laws of Majorian found a place in the Theodosian code.

As a soldier Majorian distinguished himself by defeating a Vandal band in Campania, and driving them to their ships. Encouraged by this, he determined to attack them in Africa. Making Spain the base of his operations, he prepared a fine fleet in Cartagena, and when it was ready marched round from Italy and Southern Gaul with a formidable army. Gaiseric was alarmed and sent ambassadors, but also used strata- 460.
gem, and with the connivance of traitors got into the harbour of Cartagena and destroyed the fleet. The preparation of three years was destroyed in a few hours, and Majorian returned to Rome a disappointed man. Three months later he was dethroned and executed.

461. Ricimer chose Severus II. as the next emperor. He reigned for four years and little is known of him. During this period Italy suffered greatly from Vandal pirates. The destruction of the Roman fleet at Cartagena had left the coasts at their mercy, they actually carried horses in their ships and scoured the country where they landed with light cavalry.

467. After the death of Severus II. there was an interregnum for twenty months. Such was the unhappy condition of Italy that Ricimer asked Leo, emperor at Constantinople, for help against the Vandals. Leo promised help on condition that Anthemius, his nominee, should be placed on the throne, and Ricimer agreed.

468. Next year the Eastern and Western Empires united in a campaign against the Vandals. Leo spared no expense. A thousand ships and a hundred thousand men were assembled. Marcellinus, a Byzantine general, sailed with one expedition to Sardinia and drove the Vandals from that island. Heraclius, another Byzantine general, sailed to Tripoli, landed, subdued that district, and marched towards Carthage.

Unfortunately the command of the main body was entrusted to Basiliscus, brother-in-law of Leo, but an incompetent man. He landed his troops forty miles west of Carthage, and had he marched at once must have captured the city. But he lingered, actually granting Gaiseric five days to consider whether he would surrender or no. Gaiseric made a good use of the time. Gathering his ships together and favoured by the wind he flung the Carthaginian fleet with many fire ships against the Roman vessels. A panic ensued, Basiliscus was routed and returned to Constantinople defeated and disgraced. Thus ended the expedition against the Vandals. Gaiseric was now left to work his will, and the coasts of Italy, Asia and Greece were at his mercy.

470. The failure of Leo's expedition led to a quarrel between Ricimer and Anthemius, and Ricimer retired to Milan. His friends gathered around him, and when he had a sufficient

472. army he marched on Rome. The city stood out for five

months, after which the gates were opened and Anthemius was put to death. Six weeks later Ricimer himself died.

The next emperor, Olybrius, only reigned for three months, but died a natural death. After a brief interregnum Glycerius 473. succeeded. But Leo, the emperor of the East, claimed the right of appointment, and nominated Julius Nepos, a Dalmatian. Glycerius preferred not to contest the matter, and when Julius Nepos landed in Italy he retired.

During the brief reign of Glycerius the Ostrogoths in- 473. vaded Italy, led by their king, Widemir. Glycerius persuaded them to cross Italy and enter Gaul, where they made alliance with the Visigoths.

Julius Nepos reigned for fourteen months. During his 474. reign the Visigoths pressed into Roman Gaul, and the emperor bought peace by the surrender of Auvergne. Of all Gaul the Romans only held Provence, the small territory in which the Riviera is situated.

The surrender of Auvergne was inevitable but unpopular. Even a decaying State clings to its provinces. There was a mutiny amongst the soldiers and they offered the supreme power to Orestes, their commander. Orestes refused it for himself, but nominated his son Romulus, a boy of fourteen, as emperor. Nepos declined a contest and retired to Dalmatia.

Though Orestes was the real monarch, Rome was now 476. nominally governed by one who bore the name of its legendary founder. He proved to be the last emperor, so that the founder and the last emperor had the same name. The boy emperor who was surnamed Augustulus reigned but ten months. During his short reign the Teutonic troops who formed the major part of the army demanded that one-third of the land of Italy should be divided amongst them. Orestes refused, whereupon they mutinied and invited Odovacar, a distinguished general of Hun descent, to be king. The mutiny was successful, and Orestes was slain. Augustulus was spared. Odovacar gave him a pension and assigned to him the magnificent villa Lucullus for a residence.

477. Odovacar declined the title of emperor, and at his suggestion Augustulus and the Senate sent an embassy to Zeno, now emperor at Constantinople. The embassy disclaimed the necessity or even the wish of continuing the imperial succession in Italy. One monarch was enough, they said, for both East and West, and they were content that he should dwell at Constantinople. They had chosen Odovacar, not as emperor, but merely to defend their interests, and they would be grateful to Zeno if he would recognise him as patrician and entrust the diocese of Italy to his care. Zeno at first demurred to the change but afterwards acquiesced. He invested Odovacar with the title of patrician, accepted the position of sole emperor, and had his statues erected in Rome.

478. Thus simply was carried out a revolution of world-wide significance, no less than the winding up of the affairs of the Western Empire. After seven centuries of republic and five of empire, Rome stood stripped and bare, her possessions lost and her glory departed.

CHAPTER XLII.

WHY THE EMPIRE FELL.

WE have now reached that point at which it is usual for historians to moralise about the causes which led to the fall of the Roman Empire. It is less necessary that we should do this to any very great extent in the present instance as we have endeavoured to point a moral whilst the history has proceeded. But a few words will be appropriate.

First, let us say, that we do not accept, or, at any rate, accept with great qualification, the opinion so uniformly expressed that the Roman Empire was a blessing to humanity. That the Almighty brings good out of evil, and overrules all things with wisdom we are sure, but we cannot find in this belief any justification for aggrandisement and oppression.

The acquisition of new territory by a State may sometimes be quite justifiable, and sometimes, if not altogether justifiable, at least excusable. When a country is sparsely peopled and other countries are full and overflowing, it may be natural and right that population should migrate and occupy the empty land. America is a case in point. When it was discovered, the territory now occupied by the United States and Canada was inhabited by a mere handful of wandering Indians who lived by hunting and were eternally at war. The population inhabiting those territories has now reached about 100,000,000, of whom a large proportion have come from congested districts. Such a readjustment of population is undoubtedly in the interests of humanity.

Sometimes, indeed, a nation may find a sufficient excuse for the acquisition of new territory in the pressing need of harbours for its produce or of an adequate frontier for its defence.

There was no reason for Rome confining her political organisation within her civic boundary. A city cannot easily be self-sufficing, and Rome was naturally entitled to surround herself with as much territory as would supply her wants. She might also as a matter of natural right secure for herself such a frontier as would guarantee her against the incursion of hostile bands. The limits of legitimate expansion were reached with the ocean and the Alps, and perhaps with the acquisition of the adjacent island of Sicily. Had Rome been content with these limits, the limits, in fact, of the Italy of to-day, she might have lasted in undiminished splendour from that day to this. She could have gone on developing her own peculiar institutions in her own way, an example instead of a warning, a blessing instead of a curse.

The Roman Empire declined in the first place, therefore, just because it was an empire. Had Rome been content to remain a kingdom she need never have declined at all. The essential idea of a kingdom is that of a race ruling itself. The essential idea of an empire is that of a race possessed of superior physical strength and warlike vigour undertaking to rule other races. Such a government lasts whilst the ruling race so transcends the others in strength that rebellion is hopeless, or so long as it is manifestly to the advantage of the subordinate nationalities that they should remain subordinate.

But empire is always unstable, and it is better for humanity that it should be. It is far better for nations in the long run that they should be permitted to govern themselves and work out their own destiny. It is good neither for men nor for nations that they should be held in leading strings. And there is perhaps no nation that would not rather be governed indifferently by men of its own race than governed well by strangers.

The Roman Empire may for a time have served a useful purpose. It represented certain principles of law, government and culture. Whether the nations whom it undertook to govern would not have done better even on these lines than the Romans

did for them is a matter that may be fairly discussed. Family life was purer in Germany than in Rome, and constitutional freedom was at a higher level. If Rome was great in anything it was in law, and we must ascribe high honour to the Roman jurist. Yet the legal principles which underlie English common law to-day are not Roman but Saxon.

The disease which ultimately killed the Roman Empire therefore began to take root when her generals crossed the Alps and the ocean in order to subjugate other nationalities. This was the initial error. But it soon led to others. When a nation assumes the right to govern it easily persuades itself that it has the right to enslave. For Rome the development was fatally easy and terribly disastrous.

Slavery had existed in Rome, as indeed it existed over the whole world from the earliest historic times, but it was slavery of the old-fashioned patriarchal order, and its influence was not malignant. But when Roman speculators found that vast fortunes could be made by sweeping the tribes into the slave market slavery completely changed its character. To begin with, the facility with which this new wealth could be acquired encouraged aggressive warfare. Whilst Roman generals went forth poor and returned poor war had few charms. But when they went forth poor and returned millionaires it was a different matter. There was money in war, and general, governor and speculator became partners in the nefarious enterprise. Rome expanded, not that she might find food for her people, or ports for her produce, or a scientific frontier for her defence but for the sake of ill-gotten and unholy gain.

Nor did the miserable consequences of this sort of imperial expansion end in the slave market. The nation which enslaves others ends in being itself enslaved, and Rome was no exception. Soon she was the bond servant of idleness and immorality. We have seen in former chapters how slave labour kills free labour just as inevitably as bad money displaces good. Whilst slaves are few certain tasks may be allotted to them and the evil influence of slavery may not be severely felt. But

when they are numerous they absorb the manual labour of the country. In Rome matters were still worse. Generally speaking slaves are uneducated and only fit for manual labour. But the Romans made slaves of whole tribes, rich and poor, and the slaves were often better men than their masters, both in education and birth. The masters saw this and made it a means of gain, either using the men themselves in responsible positions or hiring them out to those who could. Thus it came to pass that the shopkeeper, the artisan, the engineer, the clerk in the counting-house, the commercial traveller, the business manager, might all be slaves working for some aristocrat who allowed them a scanty pittance and became fabulously rich upon the balance of their gains. It has been estimated that at one period there were 50,000,000 slaves in the empire. Even a poor man would have ten slaves, and a well-to-do citizen might have 10,000 or 20,000.

The result of this unprecedented development of slavery was fatal. The middle class, the backbone of every well-ordered State was squeezed out of existence. Those who were enterprising emigrated, finding homes in Gaul, Asia, Dacia, and other provinces. Those who remained sank into the condition of paupers. The freeman, whose hardy ancestors had fought Rome's battles, found no place for himself in this social organisation, and drifted towards the metropolis, where he might at least become a sharer in the public dole. His ancestor had been a hero; his child was a mendicant.

The pauperisation of the Roman proletariat by free distribution of bread was partly a cause and partly a result. The pernicious habit began under the Republic and before slavery had attained the proportions which it did in later years. In the earliest times the common people were oppressed, then they were pampered. Generals and governors in grain-producing provinces purchased popularity by sending huge gifts of grain. The fact that food could often be had for nothing in the capital drew paupers there, and as slave labour extended in the rural districts paupers became more and more numer-

ous. Thus the giving of doles, begun as a luxury, became a necessity.

This abnormal development of slavery greatly weakened the defensive power of the empire. The hardy peasant, who had for centuries been the backbone of Roman power, disappeared, pressed out by the huge plantation worked by slave labour. Now slaves could be depended upon to raise money for their owners, but not to defend the empire. For a time, though Rome lacked men, she had money, and with the money she bought soldiers. For centuries her frontiers were defended, and even her conquests made by foreigners. In the subjugation of Britain, for instance, comparatively few Italian soldiers were employed, the Dutch, the Belgians and the Gauls did most of the work. Gradually the old-fashioned Roman soldier became extinct and his place was filled by mercenaries of every race, the Teutonic predominating. This could not last for ever. The time came when Rome could not afford to buy armies, and when the surrounding nations declined to be bought. Then the frontier was easily crossed, and the empire was found to be hollow. The Teutonic armies marched hither and thither scarcely encountering an enemy. Slaves there were in abundance, but why should slaves fight? Between the first and second sieges of Rome by Alaric 40,000 slaves fled from their masters and took refuge in his camp. A State which cannot reckon on its own inhabitants to resist its enemies is doomed.

With the wider slavery came also deeper corruption. Slavery terribly avenges itself. The wretch who is bought and sold like a beast is not always the worst sufferer. The community that thus deals with its fellow-man loses all delicacy of feeling. The standard of morality is lowered, and crimes which in other countries would be regarded with horror are perpetrated without a blush. In a slave-owning country life is held cheap, murder and outrage are of everyday occurrence, and ordinary commonplace virtue almost ceases to exist. Old and young become alike saturated with immorality. In Rome, with

its population of wealthy idlers, slaves and paupers, the moral code was practically in abeyance.

The fall of Rome was undoubtedly hastened by the wretchedness of her finance. During her palmy days the city thought but of conquest. Why trouble about economy when generals were adding provinces to the empire and sending home ever-increasing quantities of plunder? Account keeping was work for slaves. As a result Rome produced no great chancellor of the exchequer and taxes were levied with little regard for equity. If an emperor occasionally endeavoured to rectify matters he was looked upon as mean. Those who, like Titus, threw away money with both hands, were fine fellows.

The way in which the taxes were raised was villainously oppressive. The revenue demanded for legitimate State expenses was not excessive, and had it been fairly raised it would not have unduly oppressed the people. But the Roman financier not only relied upon the worst forms of taxation, but raised the taxes in the worst possible way. The taxes were largely farmed, and farming means the bitterest oppression and the most abominable waste. The fiscal methods of Rome over much of her empire were on a par with the fiscal methods which we are accustomed to associate with Turkish rule.

Thus such members of the middle class as survived the institution of slavery, were ruined by fiscal extortion. In the early days of the empire there were many prosperous provincial towns. Local government and imperial government prospered side by side. But the nobles who owned the huge slave plantations evaded taxation, and the pauperised lowest class had nothing to give. Taxation therefore fell in great measure on the towns. The small remnant of industry that was left in Italy had to support the burden of local taxation, the burden of imperial taxation, and the hundreds of thousands of idle ruffians whom Rome fed on doles. The result was lamentable. Trading at a profit became impossible, the towns fell to pieces, grass grew in the streets. To accept municipal office meant ruin. If a man tried to evade his military duties

he was made a town councillor, and became responsible for the taxes. It was the worst penalty that could be inflicted. Guizot has said that the destruction of the middle class by fiscal oppression was of all causes the most powerful in ruining Rome. Certainly the destruction of the middle class was infinitely powerful. When Italy ceased to produce defenders there was no longer any hope.

But we must remember that the abnormal development of slavery with its attendant evils, the spread of immorality, the pauperisation of the proletariat, the oppression of the fiscus and the destruction of the middle class had but one origin. All Rome's troubles came upon her through lust of empire, which is only another name for greed of gain. Nor were these troubles the fruit of any one reign or even of any one century. They came to be in the very nature of things. When Rome emerged from the second Punic war nearly two centuries before the Christian era she had already taken the wrong turning. A hundred and fifty years later, when Julius Cæsar was carrying her eagles triumphantly over Gaul, she was on the broad road that leads to destruction. From that road the empire never made any effort to emerge and every "glorious victory" and every added conquest made her ultimate destruction more certain.

Some eminent historians have attributed the fall of the empire in some degree to the rise of Christianity. We question if this was even a remote cause. Christianity did far more to bind than disintegrate. On more than one occasion it helped to save the State; it never injured it in any way.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THEODORIC THE GREAT.

453. WHEN Attila was dead and his Hunnish Empire had fallen to pieces the Ostrogoths recovered their independence. This important branch of the Teutonic family of nations had travelled from East Germany to the districts lying between the Danube and the Don, where they had settled, ruled by kings of their royal house of Amal. During the ascendency of Attila their fighting men joined his army, and their kings reigned as his vassals.

After Attila's death three brothers, princes of the royal house, named Walamir, Theodemir and Widemir, ruled the nation between them, Walamir, the eldest, being the king. They entered into relations with Valentinian III. and settled on lands in Pannonia, with the promise of gifts from Constan-
454. tinople in return for living a peaceful life. About this time Theodemir had a son whom he named Theodoric and who became known to history as Theodoric the Great. He was worthy of the name, for he was the greatest ruler that the Gothic nation produced.

When Theodoric was a boy of seven the subsidies from Constantinople fell into arrear and the Goths ravaged Moesia. They were pacified however, and entered into a treaty, the boy Theodoric being sent to Constantinople as a surety for its due observance. At the Eastern capital Theodoric remained for ten years. The emperor, Leo I., was very fond of him, and he was kindly treated. He learned field sports and warlike exercises, and mingled with men of affairs. But his literary attainments were not great, for when he became a king he had to use a stencil-plate in order to sign his name,

The Ostrogoths had many wars with the surrounding 470.
nations, and in one of these Walamir, the eldest brother, was killed. Theodemir, the father of Theodoric, then became king, and the youth, now seventeen years of age, returned home. Scarcely had he returned home when he distinguished himself by making an excursion against the Sarmatians in which he was victorious, capturing Singidunum (Belgrade), their capital.

Finding Pannonia too strait a place for their nation, Theodemir and Widemir determined to divide forces and enter the empire, Widemir trying his fortune in the West and Theodemir in the East.

Accordingly Widemir invaded Italy, but he died whilst on 473.
the march, and Glycerius who then ruled persuaded his son and successor to cross Italy peaceably and enter Gaul. There he made alliance with the Visigoths, and his people settled down under their king.

Theodemir marched south until he reached Thessalonica, which he besieged. Negotiations were opened with him by the court at Constantinople, and he obtained a settlement for his people near Thessalonica. Thus half the Ostrogoths settled in Gaul, the other half in the East. Immediately after these events Theodemir died, and Theodoric became king.

When Leo I. died, the year in which Theodoric succeeded 474.
to the kingship of the Goths, he bequeathed the Western Empire to his grandson Leo II. As Leo II. was only five years old his father Zeno acted as regent, and when the boy died Zeno became emperor. A revolt headed by Basiliscus, the general who showed such incompetence in Africa, drove him from the throne, and Basiliscus reigned for two years. Then he also was defeated and exiled to Cappadocia, where he perished.

Theodoric had helped Zeno against Basiliscus, but Zeno showed little gratitude. Theodoric had a rival, a prince of the same name, and Zeno played off the one against the other. The rival, however, was accidentally killed, and Theodoric was left undisputed king of the Ostrogoths.

For some years Theodoric conducted marauding expeditions

throughout Macedonia, Thessaly and Thrace; chiefly, it would seem, seeking food for his people. At last he determined to find more fertile lands and proposed to invade Italy. Odovacar ruled there, acknowledging Zeno as suzerain, but they were not friendly and Zeno did not object to Theodoric taking Odovacar's place if he could win it. In any case he was glad to get rid of him.

488. Theodoric accordingly set out for Italy, accompanied by his whole following, in all, about a quarter of a million, of whom 50,000 carried arms. On their way they were attacked by the Gepidæ, but they fought their way through them, and then, having crossed the Julian Alps, descended into Italy.

489. At the river Isonzo Odovacar disputed the passage of the Goths, but Theodoric defeated him, and at Verona, a month later, was again victorious. Odovacar fled to Ravenna and Theodoric entered Milan in triumph. The siege of Ravenna was entrusted to Tufa, a former general of Odovacar, but he proved a traitor to Theodoric and his treachery delayed the conquest of Italy for about three years. At length, however, Ravenna, reduced by famine, capitulated. By the terms of the capitulation Odovacar's life was to have been spared, but Theodoric slew him with his own hand. Odovacar had mercilessly slain some of Theodoric's friends before, nevertheless this breach of faith leaves a stain upon the character of Theodoric.

493. Theodoric reigned over Italy after the death of Odovacar for thirty-three years. The position was not an easy one, for he had to satisfy both Roman and Gothic subjects. But he did his work splendidly. By birth a Goth, he had spent many years amongst Romans and he understood their ways. It was long since Italy had known such a time of happiness. There was peace within her borders and she enjoyed an amount of prosperity to which she had been unaccustomed for centuries. The Goths were armed and the Romans did not carry arms. But they suffered no detriment, for it was understood that the Goth was the soldier and that he carried arms not to attack but to defend his Roman compatriot.

In the task of government Theodoric had the benefit of the services of two able ministers. For the first seven years of his reign Liberius was his right-hand, and afterwards Cassiodorus. With their help the various departments of the government were placed upon an excellent basis.

Finance was so reformed that a treasury found bankrupt was without oppression replenished. Taxes were lightened and their incidence made more equitable. Public works of importance were taken in hand. The Pontine Marshes were drained, harbours were constructed, the city walls were repaired. Public buildings were restored, the Appian Way and many other roads were repaired. Bricks have been found stamped with the name of Theodoric.

A royal commission with Liberius as president apportioned lands to the Goths and managed matters so tactfully that the settlement was effected to the satisfaction of Roman and Goth alike.

Most important of all, agriculture began again to flourish, and Italy, formerly dependent upon Africa for food, now actually herself exported grain.

Theodoric dwelt chiefly at Ravenna, but sometimes at Verona and Pavia. He visited Rome and was well received.

During his reign Theodoric was recognised as head of the Teutonic race, not only in Italy but throughout much of Europe. This position he consolidated by matrimonial alliances with the various royal families of the barbarians. He was brother-in-law of the king of the Franks and of the king of the Vandals, and the king of the Visigoths and the crown prince of the Burgundians were married to his daughters. His niece was married to the king of the Thuringians. Thus Theodoric was a kind of patriarch amongst the barbarian royalties, and his influence promoted the peace and happiness of Europe.

Theodoric promulgated an authoritative exposition of Roman law known as the Edictum Theodorici. This edict, of which Liberius may have been compiler, is said to have been

published in order to keep intact reverence for public right, and to ensure that laws might be known and observed by all. The edict had 154 sections, and covers a great variety of subjects. It is interesting to know that Alaric II., king of the Visigoths who reigned from 485 to 507, published a collection which is sometimes called Lex Romana Visigothorum, and sometimes, from the name of the king, Breviarium Alaricianum. Alaric was son-in-law to Theodoric, and the edicts seem to have been published about the same time, the one in Italy the other in Gaul.

With regard to religious affairs Theodoric was in a delicate position. He was an Arian, like most of the Goths, whilst the inhabitants of Italy mostly belonged to the Catholic Church. Theodoric solved the difficulty by allowing the fullest religious freedom, and ruled so justly that the orthodox, equally with the Arians, loudly praised his fairness and moderation. "We cannot command the religion of our subjects," he said, "since no one can be forced to believe against his will."

Theodoric's spirit of impartiality was extended to men of every faith. When there were anti-Jewish riots in Ravenna, Milan and Rome, and synagogues were burned, Theodoric ordered their restoration and severely punished the rioters. As a result the Jews were unswervingly loyal to the Gothic rule in Italy.

Theodoric's impartiality gave him great moral influence, and when there was division among the Catholics and two popes were elected by rival sections of the Church, Theodoric was asked to arbitrate between them.

There was little of the barbarian about Theodoric. Though his literary education may have been neglected, he was cultured in his own way, and governed with much astuteness. He never forgot that he was king both of the Romans and the Goths, and that each had to be ruled by their own laws. Had time been given, the Goths, influenced by their surroundings, would have blended with the Italian people, and the population of Italy would have been compounded of Roman and Teutonic

elements. This amalgamation took place in Gaul, and also in Spain, but not in Italy, because, as we shall presently see, Justinian undid all that Theodoric had so patiently done.

Quite early in Theodoric's reign he showed his large-heartedness in a striking way. The Burgundians had made serious raids into Liguria and had carried away many captives, who were now living amongst them as slaves. Theodoric asked Epiphanius, an eminent bishop, to cross to Burgundy as his ambassador to Gundobad, the ruler there, and to ransom as many captives as he could. Epiphanius, an old man, departed on his mission with great gladness, not even waiting until winter had passed away. Gundobad received him with much kindness. All the captives under his own control he released at once and without payment. Those in the hands of his subjects were released on moderate terms. Epiphanius brought back 6,000 persons, and Theodoric settled them in their old homes and helped them to restock their farms. This one incident, differing so greatly from the usual custom of that time, stamps Theodoric as a great and good man.

In his later years Theodoric had sore trouble. Roman influence was strong at court, for the king had chosen the best men as officials whether they were Goths or Romans, Arians or Catholics. Now Theodoric had no son to succeed him, and the heir presumptive was a grandson, a mere child. The Romans thought that when he died there would be a chance of getting back their supremacy, and they corresponded behind his back with the court at Constantinople about the succession.

When Theodoric learned what was going on he was greatly exasperated, and he determined to make an example. Accordingly Bœthius, a very eminent man, was tried, condemned and 523.
executed. The trial was conducted by the Senate, and Theodoric was not to blame, though Bœthius was probably a mere scapegoat. Unfortunately Theodoric went further and committed a crime for which there can be no excuse. Symmachus was father-in-law of Bœthius, and a worthy man against whom no charge of treason had been laid. But Theodoric, fearing apparently that

he would be disaffected because of his son-in-law's execution, ordered that Symmachus should be slain also. The crime was no sooner committed than it was bitterly repented of, and it caused Theodoric much remorse when on his deathbed.

Another unfortunate incident happened. Justin I. now sat on the throne at Constantinople, a narrow-minded man, but orthodox. He persecuted Arians unmercifully, and Theodoric who had reigned for thirty years in Italy without persecuting Catholics thought he had a right to complain.

When no notice was taken of his complaints, Theodoric sent Pope John, bishop of Rome, to Constantinople, to remonstrate and, if necessary, to threaten. He could not have chosen a worse messenger, for John, himself a Catholic, was also a narrow-minded man, who looked indulgently on the persecution, and was not over loyal to Theodoric.

John was received at Constantinople with great pomp, Justin, the emperor, going some miles to meet him, and prostrating himself in his presence. Theodoric saw that all this was merely a demonstration against himself, and considered that John, by accepting the favours which were showered upon him, compromised his position as an ambassador. Accordingly when
526. he returned to Ravenna Theodoric threw him into prison, and as he was in feeble health he died in confinement. Theodoric acted as most kings would have done, but the death of a bishop in prison turned a very commonplace man into a martyr.

The same year Theodoric himself died. On his deathbed he bewailed the deaths of Boethius and Symmachus who were both good men. Yet the historian says it was "the first and last act of injustice which he had committed against any of his subjects: and the cause of it was that he had not sufficiently examined into the proofs, before he pronounced judgment upon these men".

Theodoric deserves a high place in history. He ruled Italy for more than thirty years under trying circumstances with even-handed justice. Few of the earth's monarchs have been of greater merit. Had the policy of Theodoric been continued,

in another generation Goths and Italians would have mingled beyond the possibility of separation. Unfortunately Justinian, the emperor of the East, must needs interfere in the name of a hollow and worthless suzerainty, and by his armies Italy was once more rent asunder. Once more the Goths became an armed host in an alien land, and, lacking leadership and the old warlike aptitude, they were driven from the peninsula, leaving scarcely a trace upon Italian soil. With their great king the nation also passed away.

Theodoric was buried in Ravenna in the magnificent tomb which still stands bearing his name. It is of white marble, in two storeys, and is crowned with a monolith of enormous weight. But the body is no longer there. It is said that it was stolen by the priests and buried elsewhere to give currency to a fable that the great Arian monarch had been carried away by the devil.

About half a century ago navvies engaged in dock works in the neighbourhood found a skeleton in golden armour with a sword by its side. The armour was broken up and divided amongst them, but pieces were afterwards recovered, and they are in a museum. There is reason to believe that the remains were those of Theodoric.

Theodoric had several children by concubines, but by his royal wife only one daughter, Amalasuntha. This lady married Eutharic, a lineal descendant of the great Hermanric, so that their son Athalaric was of royal Gothic lineage on both sides. Had Eutharic survived Theodoric he would have been king, but he died before him. When, therefore, Theodoric himself lay dying he commended Athalaric, his grandson, to the Gothic nobles, asking them to be loyal to their new sovereign, and begging them to be kind to the Italians among whom they dwelt. As Athalaric was only ten years of age his mother, Amalasuntha, became regent, Cassiodorus, so long the trusted minister of Theodoric, remaining first minister of the crown.

Amalasuntha was a woman of high intellectual gifts, but 526.
without tact, and having no sympathy with the Gothic people.

She was cultured, she could speak Greek, Latin and Gothic, but all her sympathies were Roman; the rough, honest, brave but uncultured Goth had no place in her affections. As a result there were frequent disputes, tyranny on her side, covert rebellion on theirs.

The bad feeling between the regent and her Gothic nobles led her to correspond privately with Justinian, now emperor at Constantinople. From him she got much sympathy, and he offered her a refuge in case she had to fly. But the unfortunate woman was really acting the part of a traitor, and she did infinite and irreparable mischief to her people.

In his very last years Theodoric had quarrelled with the Vandals in Africa about their treatment of his sister Amalafrida. He had threatened war and they had threatened reprisals. Amalasuntha carried on the quarrel, and though it passed there was bad feeling between the courts at Ravenna and at Carthage.

531. When Amalasuntha had been regent for five years a serious quarrel arose between Gelimer, king of the Vandals, and Justinian, and the latter fitted out an expedition for the conquest of North Africa. Partly because she hated the Vandals, partly because of her pro-Roman sympathies, Amalasuntha placed Sicily at the disposal of Justinian's general, Belisarius, for re-fitting and re-victualling his fleet. It was a wicked thing to do, and in the end it led to the destruction of the Vandal kingdom in North Africa and of the Gothic kingdom in Italy.

534. Belisarius was entirely successful in Africa. The Vandals were taken by surprise and utterly defeated. Carthage was captured, and Gelimer, the Vandal king, was carried in triumph to Constantinople.

The Goths in Italy soon saw the mistake that had been made in allowing the Vandal monarchy to be thus crushed, and relations between the Gothic nobles and the regent became very strained. Justinian offered to protect her, and prepared a palace for her reception at Dyrrhachium. Amalasuntha

went so far as to embark the whole of the national treasure. Before she set sail she gave orders that three Gothic chiefs should be assassinated. Her orders were carried out, and she was so elated at her success that she determined to remain.

At this juncture Justinian sent an embassy demanding the surrender of Lilybæum, a port in Sicily, which had been formerly part of the North African province. Amalasuntha pretended to refuse his demand, but secretly offered to surrender the whole of Italy to him.

Athalaric died, and Amalasuntha, eager to keep power, asked Theodahad, a nephew of Theodoric, to share the crown with her. He agreed, but almost at once turned upon her. She was seized, imprisoned and murdered. Amalasuntha was a woman of great gifts, but few women have done more mis- 535.
chief than she, and there is no need that we should sympathise with her over much.

Theodahad now ruled in Italy. Had he been a good man he might even yet have pulled things together. Unfortunately, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, he was a worthless fellow.

CHAPTER XLIV.

EIGHT EMPERORS OF THE EAST.

OUR last chapters have dealt for the most part with the affairs of the Western Empire. We shall now turn our attention to the East.

It will be remembered that on the death of Theodosius his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, succeeded, the former ruling in Constantinople, the latter in Italy. With the reign of Honorius we have already sufficiently dealt.

ARCADIUS.—Arcadius, the elder son of Theodosius, was born in Spain and educated in Constantinople. He became
395. emperor of the East on the death of his father, and at the age of eighteen. Rufinus was his chief minister, but we have seen in a former chapter how he was murdered.

After the death of Rufinus the power at Constantinople fell into the hands of Eudoxia, the empress, Eutropius, chief officer of state, and Gainas, commander of the forces, who had been the chief instrument in the murder of Rufinus.

At this time Alaric the Goth was devastating Macedonia, and Stilicho had taken the field against him. But the court at Constantinople had no favour for Stilicho and resented his interference. They dreaded him quite as much as they did Alaric, so they came to terms with the latter. Perhaps there was an understanding that he should leave the Eastern Empire alone and turn his attention to the Western, it is not easy
397. otherwise to account for the fact that he was made master of the forces in Illyricum. At all events he spent five years in that position, training his forces and preparing for the invasion of Italy.

During this reign John Chrysostom was bishop of Constantinople. He owed his position to Eutropius chiefly, but there was little in common between the men. Eutropius became unpopular, and would have been slain but that Chrysostom gave him sanctuary. He escaped in disguise from the city, but was taken and beheaded.

Gainas now became chief minister. He was a Goth and an Arian, and he tried to obtain freedom of worship for his countrymen in Constantinople. But the influence of Chrysostom was too strong for him. Exasperated by this and by other matters that transpired, Gainas rebelled and fled from the city. He took up arms, but was defeated and driven beyond the Danube. There the Huns captured him, and their king sent his head as an offering to Arcadius.

Eudoxia was now all-powerful in Constantinople. We have 400.
in a former chapter dealt with the quarrels between her and Chrysostom, quarrels which ended in the banishment of the sincere but tactless bishop.

Arcadius professed the orthodox faith, and with the hearty assistance of Chrysostom persecuted the Arians unmercifully, confiscating their churches. At length Arcadius died, leaving one son, Theodosius, and several daughters, of whom Pulcheria is best known to fame.

THEODOSIUS II.—Theodosius, the only son of Arcadius, was 408.
but eight years of age when his father died. Anthemius, grandfather of one who ultimately became for a time emperor of the West, assumed the position of guardian of the young emperor. Anthemius discharged his duty faithfully. During his guardianship great walls were built in order to better fortify Constantinople.

After a few years Pulcheria, sister of the emperor, became 414.
regent, with the title of Augusta. She was an excellent woman, with strong religious convictions of the ascetic order, and her brother followed on the same lines. He was a good man, but narrow, and severe against those whom he was

pleased to consider heretics. He enacted a law forbidding marriage with a deceased wife's sister. The marriage was declared incest, the children bastards.

421. Theodosius married Athenais, a heathen lady who embraced Christianity before the marriage, and was baptised as a Christian with the name of Eudocia. They had a daughter Eudoxia, who in 437 married her second cousin Valentinian III., emperor of the West.

Theodosius deserves high credit for two most important acts, the foundation of a university at Constantinople and the publication of the code which bears his name.

The university was meant to further the cause of Christianity by superseding to some extent the university of Athens, long famous as a stronghold of paganism. Theodosius preferred not to attack the university of Athens directly, and in this he was wise. We shall find that a century later his great successor Justinian was not so scrupulous. In the university at Constantinople the schools of philosophy and law were specially prominent.

The Theodosian code was issued under the joint authority of Theodosius II., the emperor of the East, and Valentinian III., the emperor of the West. It was an elaborate collection of constitutions issued from the days of Constantine downwards. It was drawn up by a Royal Commission, of which the most important member was Antiochus, the Prætorian prefect and chief law adviser to the emperor. This code was used freely by Justinian's legal advisers when they compiled under his patronage the immensely important work which is associated with his name. The Theodosian code established for a time uniformity of law in the Eastern and Western Empires.

We followed in a former chapter the fortunes of Placidia, the daughter of Theodosius I. and aunt of Theodosius II. We saw how she first married Adolphus, the Gothic king, and after his death married Constantius, Honorius' commander-in-chief. When he also died Placidia found that residence

with her brother Honorius was unpleasant, and took refuge with Theodosius II., her nephew, at Constantinople. When Honorius died a usurper seized the throne, and Theodosius 423.
sent an army which defeated him and established Placidia's son, Valentinian III., in his place.

Whilst Valentinian III. was still young, Gaiseric invaded Africa at the head of his Vandal host, and Placidia, at her wits' end, besought the help of Theodosius. An expedition was sent under Aspar, a leading senator, but it was defeated. In this expedition one Marcian served. He was made a prisoner, but was afterwards released and allowed to return to Constantinople.

During the last years of Theodosius II. his dominions were harassed by Attila, whose ravages began in 441 and continued for six years. In 447 the Huns even approached Constantinople, and Theodosius, who was not a warlike man, had to make peace by paying a sum of money and relinquishing a belt of territory.

After reigning for forty-two years, the emperor was killed by a fall from his horse.

MARCIAN.—On the death of Theodosius II., Pulcheria, his 450.
elder sister, who had the dignity of empress and upon whom had fallen much of the detail of government, married Marcian, the distinguished officer above mentioned. Marcian proved an excellent colleague. He was a man of resolution and courage. When Attila, as he was wont, sent a peremptory demand for money he found that he no longer had Theodosius to deal with. Marcian firmly refused to pay any more tribute, and though Attila was enraged he thought it wiser to expend his wrath upon the Western Empire.

The death of Attila and the dissolution of his Hunnish 453.
Empire relieved both East and West of intolerable anxiety. The Ostrogoths, having first broken the power of the Huns, now began to press forward and to fill up the empty places in the empire.

454. After the death of Pulcheria, Marcian continued to reign with undiminished popularity. At this time the Western Empire was passing through much bitter experience. Ætius had been murdered by Valentinian III., then the emperor himself had fallen, and Gaiseric, king of the Vandals, benefiting by the confusion, had sacked Rome and carried thousands of her citizens into captivity.

Two years after these events Marcian died. He had proved an honest and wise ruler, and had maintained peace in the Eastern Empire at a time when the very foundations of Europe were being shaken.

LEO I.—The death of the empress Pulcheria, followed a few years later by that of Marcian, brought the Theodosian dynasty to an end. The choice of a new emperor was left to the army, and Leo, a native of Dacia, a man without literary education but with plenty of sense, was chosen. He was crowned by Anatolius, bishop of Constantinople ; an early instance, if not the first, of a Christian sovereign receiving the crown from the hands of a priest. In time the practice became general, and upon it the clergy soon based preposterous claims.

465. During the reign of Leo there was a great fire in Constantinople. It lasted four days and destroyed a wide area. Some of the best houses in the city were burned down and many public buildings.

Ricimer, the king-maker, was now at the height of his power in Italy. Anxious to crush the Vandals in Africa, he proposed a joint expedition, and Leo I. consented on condition that Ricimer accepted his nominee, Anthemius, as emperor of the West. Anthemius had married the daughter of Marcian, and was the grandson of that Anthemius, already mentioned, who guided the empire during the youth of Pulcheria and Theodosius.

Ricimer accepted the condition and Anthemius was
468. crowned. But the expedition against the Vandals was grossly mismanaged and failed miserably, after which Ricimer drove Anthemius from the throne.

The failure of the expedition caused bitter disappointment in Constantinople. The common cry of treachery was raised, and some leading men fell victims to the popular fury. But the expedition failed not through treachery, but through the incompetence of Basiliscus its commander, who obtained his appointment because he was brother-in-law to the emperor.

During the reign of Leo, Theodoric, a boy of seven, son of Theodemir, a Gothic prince, was sent to Constantinople as a hostage. Leo took a fancy to him and treated him well. When Theodoric was seventeen he returned to his people. His residence in Constantinople gave him an insight into Roman ways which nothing else could have done, and must have helped him greatly when as emperor in Italy he had to govern both Roman and Goth.

During Leo's reign heavy afflictions befell the empire. Antioch was visited by a severe earthquake, and over many parts of the empire inundations destroyed much property. There was an eruption of Vesuvius and ashes are said to have fallen in Constantinople. The fire in the capital itself we have mentioned above.

Leo's reign lasted for seventeen years, and he ruled wisely.

LEO II.—On his death-bed Leo I. nominated his grandson as his successor. He was but four years old, the son of Ariadne, Leo's daughter, and Zeno, her husband, an Isaurian. Zeno at once assumed control, and when, a few months after, the child died, Zeno was proclaimed emperor.

ZENO.—Isaurians, mountaineers from the Taurus, many of 474.
whom were in the army, were not popular in Constantinople, and the reign of Zeno was not cordially welcomed. Scarcely was he seated upon the throne when the dowager-empress, Verina, intrigued for his overthrow. Zeno had to fly to Isauria, and Basiliscus, the brother of Verina, and the man who had failed 475.
so lamentably in the expedition against the Vandals, seized the throne. But the government of Basiliscus became extremely

unpopular. Taxation was heavy, and the emperor did not satisfy the clergy. There was during his short reign another terrible conflagration in Constantinople. The destruction of property was enormous, and, worst of all, the Basilike library, founded by the emperor Julian, and containing more than 100,000 volumes, was destroyed. Many of the volumes were of priceless value, and the loss was irreparable. At length Basiliscus had so few friends that Zeno marched on Constanti-
477. nople and entered it without opposition. His rival was deposed and banished to Phrygia, where he and his family were immured and allowed to die of hunger.

Zeno had been helped in his war against Basiliscus by Theodoric, but he showed him little gratitude. For a time he played off against him a dangerous rival, Theodoric Triarius. But the latter was killed accidentally, and Zeno then made peace with Theodoric, the son of Theodemir. Shortly after Zeno encouraged him in his determination to invade Italy and displace Odovacar who had made himself objectionable to them both. Chiefly, however, Zeno was glad to see the Eastern Empire relieved of the presence of the Ostrogothic nation. Before the conquest of Italy was completed by Theodoric Zeno had died.

491. ANASTASIUS.—On the death of Zeno, through the influence of his widow Ariadne, Anastasius, a popular officer of the household, was chosen emperor. A few weeks later he consolidated his position by marrying her. Anastasius was well educated and intelligent, worthy of his high position.

During the first years of the new reign there were several revolts. The Isaurians were not satisfied to lose the influence which they had enjoyed under the former monarch. The disturbances began in the capital where there was much street fighting. Unfortunately, also, there were further conflagrations and much of the city was destroyed.

An Isaurian war followed and lasted for five years. The Isaurians were a stout-hearted, mountaineering race, and their

homes in the Taurus were inaccessible so that they were not easily subdued.

The Isaurian war was followed by one with Kobad, king of Persia. 502. There had been peace with Persia for more than half a century, but it was now broken. The war lasted for three years, and the Romans lost on the whole. But Kobad had other enemies and he was glad to make peace, accepting the payment of an indemnity from Anastasius.

The withdrawal of the Ostrogoths from Thrace and Illyricum had left land unoccupied, and the northern tribes, the Slavs and the Bulgarians, began to flock in. Lest they might come too far, Anastasius built a fortified wall across the isthmus to defend the capital. It was fifty miles long, it isolated Constantinople, and served as a valuable defence to it for many centuries. Parts of it still stand.

Anastasius was provident and economical, and though men called him parsimonious, the empire stood sorely in need of a ruler of his sort. He reformed the finance, commuted tithes, and abolished taxes which were specially oppressive. Leo's unsuccessful expedition against the Vandals had emptied the treasury, and Zeno had done little to improve matters. But Anastasius gave the strictest personal attention to finance. Thus he was able to carry out important works, to reduce taxation, and to leave a well-filled treasury when he died.

Anastasius was the first sovereign against whom sentence of excommunication was uttered. He was heterodox, and had the courage of his opinions. This did not please the priesthood, they fomented rebellion, and he retaliated by banishing some of the bishops. A bull of excommunication was accordingly issued by Symmachus, bishop of Rome.

The emperor was not naturally a persecutor, but in his declining years he was harassed by meaningless and ferocious disputes between the rival factions into which Constantinople was divided, and thus was led into acts of harshness and even cruelty. He reigned for twenty-seven years, and died more than eighty years of age. He was not a great man, but he

was a man with noble qualities, sympathetic and generous, and his reign was prosperous.

518. JUSTIN I.—On the death of Anastasius Justin, his trusted officer and commander of the guards, was proclaimed emperor. He was orthodox, and his appointment gave general satisfaction. He was a brave and experienced soldier but was unaccustomed to civil affairs, and illiterate. Moreover, he was nearly seventy years of age. Accordingly he interfered little in matters of civil government, leaving that department to his quæstor Proclus, by whom he was faithfully served.

Shortly after Justin's accession he adopted his nephew Uprauda as his colleague and ultimate successor. Uprauda took the name of Justinian in honour of his uncle, and became one of the most famous of Roman emperors.

During Justin's reign Theodoric was ruling in Italy, and we have already seen how correspondence of a somewhat traitorous character was carried on between his senate at Ravenna and Justin's court at Constantinople, We have also seen how Justin, who was orthodox, persecuted the Arians in the Eastern Empire, whilst Theodoric, who was an Arian, allowed the fullest liberty of conscience in the Western. Theodoric remonstrated, and Justin's refusal to give the Arians fair play led to much ill-feeling. The embassy of Pope John from Theodoric to Justin, and all that came out of it, has been already dealt with.

527. Justinian, the nephew of Justin, was born about 483, assumed the consulate in 521 and in 527 was created Augustus. In the same year, by the death of his uncle, he became sole monarch.

CHAPTER XLV.

JUSTINIAN.

WE have now to deal with the reign of a monarch who left an indelible mark upon history. Not that he was a truly great man. But he was able, versatile, industrious, and clever at choosing his servants. He must also have had dignity and determination, for he kept his prestige amidst many difficulties and never allowed any officer, however great, to undermine his influence. 527.

Justinian married Theodora, daughter of the keeper of the menagerie in Constantinople. The father died, and the widow and children were left without means, so Theodora, who was exceptionally beautiful and clever, went on the stage. The acting profession was considered degrading at that time, and an actress was looked upon as a disreputable person. This prejudice has lasted even to our own day, but it was extremely strong amongst the Romans. Not that they objected to seeing plays acted, their objection was solely to the actor. We must accept this with much else that was illogical in the Roman moral code. The Romans deemed the gladiator, perhaps a captive appointed to die to make a Roman holiday, an infamous person. Thus did they salve their consciences when they saw him weltering in his blood. Romans deemed the eunuch, robbed of his manhood in infancy by the brutality of others, a very infamous person indeed; and if, in spite of every disadvantage, he struggled into greatness, they deemed all to spring from the lowest motives and the most unworthy ambition. So also the slave, often enough in birth and breeding a better man than his master, was infamous; and the poor actress, struggling in the hardest of professions to earn a crust,

was the most infamous of all. We must accept this want of enlightenment amongst the ancients as we find it, but we need not adopt their standard. Yet some modern historians, even amongst those accounted great, have done this. By them also the gladiator, the slave, the eunuch, the actor are consigned to shame and everlasting contempt. Many characters have suffered in this way, none more than Theodora. We dismiss with contempt the gross and often palpably ridiculous tales about the empress, culled from a wicked and unreliable book called the *Secret History*. Had Theodora been the vile creature described, Justinian, who was far from being a fool, must have known it well. Yet he married her, not hastily, but with deliberation, having first obtained the repeal of the law which forbade that one of senatorial rank should marry an actress. He had enough influence also to prevail upon his uncle, Justin I., to confer upon her the lofty title of patrician. Moreover, he, who thought most highly of the dignity of the imperial office, insisted on Theodora being crowned with himself, "an equal and independent colleague in the sovereignty of the empire". Justinian, a man remarkable for self-restraint and austerity, joined the name of the empress with his own with equal honour in all his pious and charitable foundations; he celebrated her prudence; he spoke of her as a gift from God; and he remained her devoted husband for a quarter of a century. We prefer to judge Theodora by these incontrovertible facts rather than by the wicked tales concerning her which have passed current for history. All that we need say is that Justinian married a very beautiful girl of humble parentage, who was driven to the stage for a living and became a successful actress. After her marriage this lady retained the affection of her husband and filled her exalted position with dignity. She was extremely benevolent; she cared for orphans, emancipated slaves, and, mindful of the temptations which had surrounded her own girlhood, she built the first institution for the reclamation of fallen women known in Christendom.

Justinian earned his title to immortality by codifying

Roman law. Roman law consisted mainly of two elements, the decrees or constitutions of the emperors and the opinions of eminent jurists. There was a mass of literature on the subject, and previous attempts had been made at codification, but much remained to be done. In the first half of his reign, aided by Tribonian and the best lawyers available, Justinian gathered the law together in a great work called the *Corpus Juris Civilis*. This is in three parts, the Code, the Digest or Pandects, and the Institutes. In the Code, the decrees or constitutions of the emperors are carefully collected, such as are obsolete being omitted. In the Digest, the decisions of the most important lawyers of the past are edited and arranged. The Institutes, based in great measure upon an earlier work by Gaius, form a commentary on the principles of Roman law. The whole of the work is done in so practical and efficient a way that after thirteen centuries the *Corpus Juris Civilis* stands unsurpassed as a treasury of legal knowledge and a whetstone for the legal mind.

As an administrator, Justinian left much to be desired. Anastasius had left a full treasury, Justinian left it empty. His people at home and abroad were ruined by taxation. Misery abounded and insurrections were frequent throughout his reign. Some part of the financial strain was the result of Justinian's passion for building. In this he was indefatigable. Not merely in Constantinople but all over the empire, no matter with what difficulty money was obtained, and no matter how greatly it might be needed elsewhere, Justinian's mania for building must be satisfied. New towns, new churches, aqueducts, bridges, fortifications, baths, palaces sprang up on all sides. Some of the work added to the prosperity of the empire, but much was vain show. The building of St. Sophia, now a mosque, cost a fabulous sum, and although it might have been justifiable had Justinian been wealthy, it was unjustifiable in an empire which was becoming poorer every day.

Though Justinian's expenditure upon public works was lavish, it was by foreign war that the people were chiefly bled

Had he remained at peace the rest might have been borne. But he tried to reconstruct the Roman Empire. The countries which had formed the empire were at peace. In Africa, where the Vandals ruled, population was increasing and the people were prosperous. Sicily, though nominally under the rule of the Goths, was practically independent and quite content. In Italy, where Theodoric had ruled with much wisdom, and where his daughter Amalasuntha was now ruling, taxation was light, agriculture was thriving, and Roman and Goth were slowly welding together. But Justinian was not content to let well alone. He must needs play the grand monarch. In Belisarius and Narses he found generals capable of carrying out his warlike schemes, and he was encouraged in them by priests eager to spread orthodoxy even by the sword. So on one pretext or another Justinian sent forth his armies, until Africa was a desert, Italy was depopulated, and his own home provinces were bloodless, breathless and miserable. Yea, even when he was so beset at home that he could scarcely protect his own capital, and barbarian raiders were snatching his subjects into captivity from before his very eyes, he was sending his armaments to Africa, Italy and Spain, eager to extend an empire which he could neither defend nor govern.

528. Justinian inherited a feud with Kobad, king of Persia, and hostilities broke out the year after his accession. Next year Belisarius, then a young man, was made general of the army in the East. He defeated the Persians in the great battle of
530. Daras. Next year Kobad died, and was succeeded by his son Chosroes I., who carried on the war.

It is probable that at a very early period in his reign Justinian set his heart upon the destruction of the Teutonic kingdoms and the reunion of the Roman Empire. He was young, he had a good army, a brilliant general, and great store of treasure. The Teutonic kingdoms were weak and divided. Justinian's orthodox soul, moreover, was vexed by the fact that the Teutons were Arians, and the orthodox clergy, who had

much influence at his court, assured him that the triumph of his arms would be the triumph of true religion

Justinian determined to begin his attack on the Teutons by crushing the Vandals in Africa. For this he required the services of his great general, so he ordered him to bring the Persian war to a conclusion and return to Constantinople. Belisarius accordingly arranged a treaty with Chosroes and returned.

Whilst Belisarius was in Constantinople serious riots 532.
occurred. The citizens were divided into factions, taking opposite views upon political and religious questions. Party feeling ran high, and every public assembly was made an occasion of rioting and bloodshed. Generally speaking one of the two great factions, the blues and the greens, enjoyed imperial favour and sided with the court. But the severity of the taxes alienated all parties and riots broke out which amounted to a revolution. The streets were thronged with the populace, many buildings were set on fire, and blood flowed freely.

So serious was the aspect of affairs in Constantinople that Justinian's ministers counselled flight. But the empress would not hear of it and her advice was followed. Belisarius and Narses laid plans for crushing the revolution, and it was crushed, but not until thirty thousand had been slain.

Constantinople was now at peace, and Justinian proceeded with his schemes of conquest. There was much opposition to his African expedition. John of Cappadocia, the finance minister, and as such the most unpopular man at court, tried to dissuade the emperor from the enterprise. For a time he hesitated, but ambition, orthodoxy and apparently in-bred hatred of the Teutonic race carried the day.

An armament sailed from Constantinople to Sicily. The 533.
island was under Gothic rule and should have sympathised with the Vandals. But Amalasuntha, the Gothic queen, was pro-Roman in her sympathies. She had been in correspondence with Justinian, and she had a grudge against the Vandals.

Accordingly she gave Belisarius every facility for provisioning and refitting his expedition in her island. It was a pity, for in thus furthering the destruction of the Vandals, she destroyed her own people.

Belisarius crossed from Sicily, and landed his troops a hundred and thirty miles west of Carthage. The Vandals were wholly unprepared. Gelimer, their king, was in Numidia; his brother with the flower of the Vandal army was in Sardinia.

As Belisarius marched on the city of Carthage he kept his troops well in hand and paid for all supplies. This moderation pleased the people, and as the Catholic clergy and men of Roman nationality sympathised with him, his march was for a time unopposed. Ten miles from Carthage he was attacked by Gelimer, whose forces he routed. When the Vandal army returned from Sardinia the brothers again tried their fortune,
534. but in the battle of Tricamaron they were finally overthrown.

Gelimer surrendered, and graced the triumph accorded to Belisarius at Constantinople. Justinian treated him kindly and gave him an estate in Asia. Amongst the spoils were the golden vessels from the temple of Jerusalem. They had been taken to Rome by Titus and to Africa by Gaiseric. Justinian sent them back to Jerusalem and they were lodged in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The re-establishment of Roman rule in Africa did not bring peace. The soldiers whom Belisarius had left as a garrison were the most discontented of all. They had not received the rewards they had looked for, they were heavily taxed, and their very religion was under a ban. For they themselves were barbarians, they had married Vandal wives, and such religion as they had was of the Arian form. But Justinian had now established orthodoxy and they could not even baptise
536. their children in their own faith.

There was a mutiny in Africa and Belisarius, who was in Sicily, had to return. He crushed the mutiny and returned to Sicily. The mutiny broke out again and was eventually ex-

tinguished by Germanus, the nephew of Justinian. Africa was now at peace, but it was the peace which heralds the approach of death. Year by year the fertile province, once the granary of the empire, sank more deeply into decay. Those who had anything to lose left a country where prosperity could no longer be looked for. Tribes from the interior ravaged the land; the imperial tax-collector took anything that was left. During the reign of Justinian the population of the province of Africa fell 5,000,000. Thus did this emperor wantonly destroy that which might have proved an irresistible barrier to arrest the progress of Mohammedanism.

After his success in Africa Justinian turned his attention to Italy. The son of Amalasuntha had died, the queen herself had been murdered, and Theodahad, her cousin, was king. Against him Justinian declared war. Making Sicily once more 535.
the base of his operations, Belisarius arrived there from Constantinople with 7,500 men, and the Sicilian towns quickly opened their gates. So alarmed was Theodahad that he opened negotiations with Justinian and offered to abdicate if he would guarantee him an annual income. Justinian agreed, but Theodahad changed his mind and the war proceeded. Belisarius advanced, captured Rhegium and Naples, and was master of Southern Italy. Then he marched on Rome. As Theodahad had done nothing to check the Romans, the Goths deposed him and elected their general Witigis in his stead. The choice was unfortunate. Witigis was a brave enough soldier, but incapable of coping with a general like Belisarius. His career was a series of blunders. Not that his task was easy, for Italy was greatly divided. Benefits are soon forgotten, and the long, wise reign of Theodoric was a thing of the past. The native Italians, who were in the majority, probably preferred that Justinian should triumph.

Witigis garrisoned Rome and fell back on Ravenna. This was a mistake. Pope Silverius, the bishop of Rome, at once sent messengers to Belisarius offering to surrender the city, and the soldiers of the garrison knew that they were in the 536.

midst of traitors. When therefore Belisarius advanced and entered by the Porta Asinaria, the garrison departed through the Porta Flaminia. Belisarius then repaired the fortifications, provisioned the city, and settled down in the position of van-
537. tage which Witigis had so easily abandoned.

Having gathered a great army, Witigis now returned and laid siege to Rome. But neither at blockade nor assault could he match Belisarius. At last, when a year had been wasted
538. and their army had greatly dwindled, the Goths raised the siege and departed, their courage rendered useless by the incapacity of their king.

539. After these things the war dragged on slowly. The Franks, seeing the divided state of the country, marched into Italy a hundred thousand strong, and warred against Goth and imperialist alike. They wasted the valley of the Po and for some years held part of Northern Italy.

540. At length only Ravenna, and two or three northern cities held out against Justinian. Belisarius laid siege to Ravenna. When the siege had been some time in progress the Goths proposed that he himself should become emperor and reign in Italy. Belisarius pretended to agree and thus obtained peace-
540. able possession of the city. But when he had disbanded the Gothic army he ruled in Justinian's name.

Belisarius was now recalled. His work in Italy seemed at an end, and a war had broken out with Persia. This war had been incited by Witigis, and had it begun earlier it might have greatly helped the Gothic cause. But the diversion came too late to be of service. When Belisarius departed he carried Witigis with him to Constantinople as a prisoner, the second Teutonic king whom he had vanquished.

Alarmed at the progress that Justinian was making, and fearing that he would himself be the next victim, Chosroes, the king of Persia, again took the field, marched up the Euphrates valley and attacked Northern Syria. Berœa was sacked, Hierapolis ransomed at a price, and Antioch besieged. This

important city was taken and plundered, and Chosroes returned to his winter quarters laden with spoil.

Next year Belisarius appeared on the scene, but Chosroes raided in another direction and thus avoided meeting the great general in the field. 541.

The year after a terrible plague arose in the East. Persia and the empire were alike swept by it. Originating apparently in Egypt it spread through Palestine into Persia, and by way of Constantinople into Europe. It raged in Constantinople for four months. Justinian himself caught the infection but recovered. 542.

Next year Belisarius was recalled. The plague had terribly aggravated the already wretched condition of the empire. Commerce was at a standstill; over huge districts there was no longer any population to tax; the emperor himself had been smitten, and was old before his time. Constantinople was suffering from famine as well as plague. 543.

The following year, the plague having abated in Persia, Chosroes invaded Mesopotamia and besieged Edessa. There were three experienced generals in the city at this time, and it was defended with remarkable ability and enthusiasm. At last Chosroes accepted a bribe from the citizens and departed. Next year he concluded a five years' truce with Justinian. 544. 545.

When Belisarius left Italy to take part in the Persian war disaster fell upon the Roman arms. There was indeed general dissatisfaction. The Roman soldiers left by Belisarius had not received the promotion and gifts to which they were entitled, and the Italian people were ground down by taxation. Justinian had expected a rich revenue from Africa and Italy, and had set comptrollers of taxes over both countries. But the tax-collectors scarcely paid their way. Africa was all but bankrupt, and money was obtained from Italy only by the severest pressure and by bringing forward the most monstrous claims. Under Gothic rule taxation had been extremely light, so the contrast was great. The Italians regretted their precipitancy in changing masters, and the Gothic cause revived.

540. When Witigis was carried into captivity the Goths elected Hildibad as his successor. He was murdered and succeeded by Baduila or Totila, who reigned for eleven years. Totila was an excellent leader, a chivalrous enemy, and a far-seeing man. Soon all Italy, except Rome, Spoleto and Ravenna was in his hands. Gladly would he have come to an understanding with Justinian, but the emperor detested the very name of Goth.

544. When Belisarius returned from Mesopotamia Justinian sent him back to Italy. The forces with which he entrusted him were, however, so meagre that he could achieve little. Historians have attributed this want of support to jealousy and intrigue, but it seems needless to suspect such reasons. The shadow of the plague was still resting on the empire and Justinian had probably neither men nor money to send. Had he recognised this and left Italy altogether alone it would have been a blessing.

Notwithstanding the best efforts of Belisarius, Totila marched throughout Italy and invested Rome. The siege
546. lasted for a year and the city was captured and plundered. It throws an interesting light upon Gothic character to know that though the soldiers were allowed to slay the men they were strictly forbidden to touch the women in the conquered city. Totila did not love Rome, and he determined that he would not hold it. Accordingly he broke down the walls, burnt the gates and withdrew. For forty days Rome was without inhabitant, but after that Belisarius occupied it and repaired the walls. Totila, disgusted, returned and thrice assailed it, but finally withdrew and left the city alone. The possession of Rome had ceased to be of much importance. During Justinian's reign it changed hands five times.

548. After five years in Italy Belisarius was again recalled. He had done little, for his resources had been inadequate. Moreover the exactions of the tax-collector had changed the views of the Italians with regard to imperialism, and they were not now well inclined towards Justinian.

During the four years that followed the departure of Beli-

sarius the power of Totila reached its zenith. He recaptured Rome, occupied Sicily, and pillaged the coasts of Sardinia and Epirus. Justinian would now perhaps have been glad of peace, but his court was full of Roman refugees who pressed him to continue the war.

At length a new expedition was despatched to Italy, with 552.
Narses in command. The choice was a strange one, for Narses was seventy-five years of age. But he was an able general, and the result justified the choice. His army was barbarian for the most part, Heruli, Lombards and Gepidæ, perhaps 20,000 strong. Cleverly evading forces sent to intercept him, Narses reached Ravenna without striking a blow. Then he marched towards Rome and met Totila at Taginæ in Umbria. The Goths fought with their usual courage but were out-numbered, out-manœuvred and utterly overthrown, Totila was slain, and darkness only saved them from annihilation.

Such Goths as escaped the slaughter of Taginæ fled to Pavia and chose Teias, one of their generals, as king. But he made no headway against Narses. Rome was easily recaptured by the imperial troops, and then came the final struggle. A battle was fought near Naples, the Goths fighting with the courage of despair. When Teias and most of the warriors had fallen, the remnant submitted. Narses granted quarter on condition that they should leave Italy, and never again war against the empire. A thousand Goths refused to pledge 553.
themselves and broke away. The rest marched sadly to the Alpine passes and so out of Italy.

Teias had appealed to the Franks for aid against Narses, and they came, but too late to be of service. They divided their force in twain and half marched down the east coast and half down the west. One of the armies was destroyed by famine and pestilence, the other by Narses. Few escaped. The Gothic power in Italy was at an end, and the country ravaged and ruined was again a part of the empire. Every trace of the kingdom of Theodoric had disappeared, and Narses was the first governor of the reconquered peninsula.

Whilst the conquest of Italy was in progress the armies of Justinian were also engaged in Spain. The success of Belisarius in North Africa and Italy alarmed the Visigoths, and
544. Theudis, their king, invaded the newly created imperial province in Africa. His army was, however, almost annihilated.
550. Some years after there was a disputed succession in Spain and Athanagild, one of the rivals, begged Roman aid. Justi-
551. nian sent Liberius, the governor of Africa, and many towns on the south-east coast opened their gates to him. Alarmed at the progress of the Romans the Goths united under Athanagild and accepted him as king. Athanagild now greatly desired the departure of the Romans, but they were not easily got rid of. They did not acquire more territory, nor did they penetrate into the interior of Spain, but sixty years passed before all the towns which they had acquired were recovered by the Goths.

When the five years' truce with Persia ran out hostilities
550. were renewed. This time the fighting was at Colchis in Caucasia. Here Justinian had an advantage, for he could bring his troops by sea, whereas the Persians had to reach the Colchian coast by way of Armenia or Iberia. This wretched war dragged on for some years, and then a fifty years' peace was
562. arranged. Chosroes surrendered his claim on Colchis, and Justinian undertook to pay him £18,000 annually. The first seven instalments were to be paid at once.

Justinian's last years were neither peaceful nor prosperous. The Slavs were now making their entrance into history and were ravaging the provinces of the empire and threatening Constantinople. Allied with the Bulgarians they ravaged the Balkan peninsula as far as the Gulf of Corinth, and took, it is said, 100,000 prisoners back with them beyond the Danube.
558. The Huns also crossed the Balkans and ravaged Thrace. Four thousand of them even rode up to the gates of Constantinople. There was a great panic, and Justinian appealed to Belisarius to save the empire. The veteran general had but a handful of reliable troops and a levy of half-armed peasants,

but so skilfully did he manipulate them that the enemy imagined him to have an immense army behind him and fled. It was one of the best things that Belisarius had done.

In Justinian's last years there was a conspiracy against 562.
him, and Belisarius was suspected of having known of it. He was under a cloud for eight months, but after that time was received back into favour. The stories told about his excessive poverty in old age are mythical. He died in the possession of 565.
his riches and honours in March, 565, and Justinian died in December of the same year.

Justinian was a great lawyer. His work in connection with Roman jurisprudence entitles him to high honour. But this is about all that can be said for him. Had he avoided aggressive warfare his reign might have been a blessing. But he must eternally meddle with other peoples, so his reign became a curse. The weakness of the Roman Empire when he ascended the throne was already very great. Justinian bled it to death. Africa relapsed into barbarism. The fair provinces in which Phœnicians, Romans and Vandals had thriven became desert. Italy had recuperative power, and though depopulated and impoverished, it recovered in the end. But Africa never did. Nor was the condition of the Eastern provinces much better. The tax-collector ruthlessly drained their substance, and for years Justinian was spending the capital of his subjects, living upon their vital energies. No revenue could keep pace with his wastefulness, and when he died his very name was abhorred.

Justinian's ecclesiastical policy was as mistaken as his foreign policy and scarcely less disastrous in its results. He regarded himself as the final authority in Church affairs, began life orthodox, ended it a heretic, and all the time persecuted those of the contrary opinion without mercy. Forced conversion was the order of the day. In Asia Minor alone 70,000 persons were baptised under compulsion. Certain forms of heresy were considered capital offences. Pagans and heretics were excluded from the privilege of citizenship.

Justinian suppressed the schools of philosophy in Athens. The professors were pagans, but the schools were so famous that they drew students from all parts of the world, and many of the Fathers of the Church had been educated there. The teachers fled to Persia in search of religious freedom. But they did not find it, and at last by the intercession of the king of Persia they were permitted to return to the empire and end their days in peace.

During Justinian's reign the Saxons and Britons were fighting for supremacy in the island which had once belonged to Rome. It is strange to have to record that this once important Roman island, in which Constantine had been proclaimed emperor, was now so thoroughly forgotten in Constantinople that it had become the subject of legend. The fishermen of Northern Gaul had, so says the legend, the task of rowing boats laden with ghostly forms across to Britain by night. They accomplished the voyage in the space of an hour, whereas ordinary mortals could only cross in a day and a night. As the oarsmen departed they could hear voices speaking to the souls whom they had left in this uncanny land.

THE SARACENS.

ARABIA
CASPIAN SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
CYPRUS
ANTIOCH
EDESSA
MOSUL
MESOPOTAMIA
TEHERAN
ISPAHAN
DAMASCUS
SYRIA
BAGDAD
CTESIPHON
IRAK
BABYLON
SUSHAN
KUFA
ARABY
PERSIA
PERSEPOLIS
ALEXANDRIA
ARABIA
EGYPT
HEJER
PERSIAN GULF
NEJD
MEDINA
BAHREIN
OMAN
MUSCAT
NUBIA
RED SEA
MECCA
HADRAMAUT
YEMEN
INDIAN OCEAN
ABYSSINIA
ADEN

THE SARACENS.

CHAPTER I.

ARABIA.

BEFORE the days of Mohammed little was known of Arabia, and, indeed, little is known of it yet. There is not the same ignorance with regard to the Arabian. He has kept well in touch with the world. In early times, before the ship of the desert was superseded by the ship of the sea, the Arabians enjoyed a large share of the carrying trade between Europe and India. The Phœnicians, the Romans, and the Byzantines traded with India, Abyssinia and East Africa by way of Arabia, and a country, not itself rich in natural productions, became rich as an *entrepôt*, and as an agent and carrier for the merchants of other lands.

The Arabian himself was therefore well in evidence. His caravans, his horses, his camels, were familiar objects in the market places of Syria, Persia and Egypt. His qualities were well understood. He was predatory by instinct; seldom hesitating to plunder when he got the chance, but scrupulously honest in matters of trust, ready to defend with his life, if need were, the person or property formally delivered to his care. Perhaps this last was less a virtue than a necessity. Had it been otherwise, the carrying trade of Arabia must soon have passed away.

The fighting qualities of the Arabian were also appreciated. From the earliest times robber bands on horses and camels had issued from Arabia, raided the border countries, and hurried back with their spoil to regions so waterless and desolate that

none dared follow. Sometimes their conquests had been more permanent. Arabian dynasties had ruled in the Euphrates Valley, and the Hyksos kings who governed Egypt for centuries were probably Arabian.

Arabia had never been fully subjugated by a foreign power. Alexander the Great contemplated its conquest, but death interrupted his project. The Romans during the reign of Augustus
B.C. 25. invaded Western Arabia. They were in possession of Egypt and wanted to command the Red Sea and get the Indian trade entirely into their hands. An expedition was accordingly sent under Ælius Gallus, an officer holding a high post in Egypt, but the men, though the natives gave them little trouble, suffered so severely from disease and hunger that they were thankful to beat a precipitate retreat.

The fringe of the country had been subjugated from time to time; in the north by Romans, Byzantines and Persians; in the south by Persians and Abyssinians. But the central plateau had never been subjugated, never even explored by the foreigner. To this the inhospitable nature of the country was in early days the chief obstacle, for the people themselves were disunited, and there was no independent state of such power or importance as could have opposed any considerable resistance to an adequate military force.

The south-west corner of Arabia was called Yemen, sometimes Arabia Felix. Saba (Sheba) was an important city there in early times, and its queen visited Solomon a thousand years before the Christian era. Fifty years before the birth of Mohammed the Abyssinians, who were Christians of a sort, overthrew the native dynasty in Yemen, and ruled there. Then the Persians interfered, the Abyssinians were expelled, and the province fell under Persian rule.

Travellers on the Red Sea have noticed the mountain ranges of red sandstone at varying distances from the coast, sometimes almost touching the water's edge, sometimes standing farther back. The mountains form the side of a vast plateau, which the heat of the sun and the lack of water make for the most

part arid and unproductive. Yet here and there, in hollow places, springs break forth, and green and fertile oases greet the weary traveller.

Between the plateau and the sea lies a strip of level and fertile land of varying width. This strip is well populated and much of it has been explored. Yemen, the south-west corner already mentioned, is the most prosperous part, having the ancient city of Aden, now a British possession. Aden traded with Tyre three thousand years ago, and is mentioned in Ezekiel.

Above Yemen, on the western shore, lies the province of Hejaz, with the seaport of Jeddah and the cities of Mecca and Medina. As Hejaz and Yemen could be commanded from the sea, they were vulnerable, and Yemen was, as we have seen, sometimes subdued. But only the seaboard was affected, in the mountains the Arabs maintained their independence.

Though the soil and climatic conditions of Arabia forbid agriculture over most of its area, yet there are fertile nooks here and there, whence spices, perfumes and fruits are exported. In such places there are settled populations, and they afford resting-places for the caravans. Inns, stabling and the various industries connected with the carrying trade spring up; villages develop, and sometimes towns. Fairs are held periodically at some of the towns, and increase their importance. The horses and camels of Arabia, bought largely at fairs, have been famous from antiquity.

For the protection of pilgrims and of merchants going to the fairs, the Arabs, like the Greeks of earlier days, observed a truce during certain months of the year, three at one time and one at another, four months in all. The truce was well observed, because so manifestly for the common good. To attack an enemy during the sacred months was considered sacrilege.

The city of Mecca was specially well-placed. It stood forty miles from Jeddah, at the intersection of two important caravan routes. A little east lay the town of Ukaz, where was held

annually one of the most popular of Arabian fairs. In Mecca stood the Kaaba, or cube, a temple of antiquity famous throughout Arabia. There were several other centres of pilgrimage in Arabia, but the Kaaba was pre-eminently the temple of Allah, the Supreme God, and vows taken, covenants made, and curses uttered in its vicinity had special significance. The sanctity of the Kaaba extended to its precincts, some square miles in all. As fighting was not permitted within this sacred area, men traded in Mecca with special security.

The religion of the Arabs before the days of Mohammed was a medley of superstition. They worshipped the heavenly bodies, spirits benevolent and malevolent, stocks and stones, anything and everything. Fetiches and charms were common. The talisman is peculiarly Arabic. They had many local gods, each tribe its own. But though each tribe or even family might have a patron deity, like most idolaters they had some conception of one supreme, all-ruling providence. Allah Taâla, the Most High God was over all, but was too busy to attend to the individual, and not to be lightly invoked. The Kaaba was specially dedicated to Allah, but the tribes had also their patron deities there, so that there were hundreds of idols in and around the sanctuary.

Before entering the sacred territory of the Kaaba the pilgrims divested themselves of their clothing, and donned raiment supplied by the custodians of the temple. Any food they had brought with them they left with their clothing outside the sacred boundary, so that they were clothed and fed during the days of pilgrimage by the temple custodians. They were superintended in their devotions by appointed guides; they visited the Kaaba, kissed the sacred black stone; walked seven times around the building; seven times ran up the hills Safa and Marwa and down again; walked round Arafat, a hill ten miles east of Mecca; threw stones at three pillars in the Mina Valley and sacrificed. Then the head of the pilgrim was shaved, and his nails were pared, and with the burial of the hair and parings the pilgrimage was complete.

The Kaaba was an ancient sanctuary, dating several centuries before the Christian era. The legend declared it to have been built by Seth, and restored by Abraham and Ishmael, under the direction of the angel Gabriel. The black stone in the eastern angle was said to have been originally a jacinth of brilliant whiteness, but to have become black by absorbing the sins of its devotees. Probably the stone was meteoric. A mosque has been built round the Kaaba, which has been destroyed and renewed on several occasions, and the stone worn and broken is bound together by silver bands.

The Arabians are fond of tracing their descent to Abraham, and various places round the Kaaba are connected with his name and that of Ishmael. It is likely enough that Ishmaelitish tribes mingled with the Arabs, but Arabia was peopled thousands of years before the days of Abraham, and the Arabs are a mixed race. The legends about Abraham were grafted on to the Arabic native legends after the Jews began to settle in Northern Arabia, and the early part of Arabian genealogies has been copied from Jewish books.

The Jews became numerous in Arabia. Palestine had been often raided, and its inhabitants were scattered again and again. Sargon, Nebuchadrezzar, Pompey, Vespasian, and Hadrian, had each in his turn dealt roughly with the country, and many Jews had been driven into exile. For such Arabia lay temptingly near. Into its desert wilds the enemy dared not penetrate. Medina, formerly called Yathrib, was a Jewish colony.

There were also a good many Christians in Arabia, and the parts of Syria adjacent. As a rule they belonged to sects counted heterodox, and had been driven into exile by the orthodox Church. The fathers probably had been sincere and earnest men, but their descendants, like most Christians of that period, sadly lacked the spirit of Christianity. They were more fond of discussing subtleties of doctrine than of preaching the Gospel. Though, therefore, Mohammed met Christians and conversed with them he never understood Christianity.

Had he, early in life, met some single-minded Aquila or Priscilla to instruct him in the things of God, the history of the Eastern world might have been different. But in the sixth century the Christianity of the East was exceedingly corrupt. Image worship was widely prevalent and rites and ceremonies were credited with magical power. There was often little difference between the Christians and the idolaters by whom they were surrounded.

Generally speaking, the idol worshipper is a tolerant man. He has his own god, and is willing that you should have yours. He does not ask that you should worship his god, he does not even desire it, for you might rob him of a share in its favours. The Romans of old carefully concealed even the name of their civic deity, lest she might be tempted away to another city. Before the days of Mohammed, therefore, the Arabians did not object to the presence of Jews and Christians in their midst. But Christianity made little progress amongst them. The whole temper of the tribes, their vindictive codes, their love of fighting, their plundering propensities, their vagrant habits, were all antagonistic to Christian teaching. With the Jew the Arab had more affinity. But he was content to claim descent from Abraham, and graft the picturesque narratives of the Jewish Scriptures upon his own legends. The Arab faith borrowed something from Judaism, but yielded nothing to its influence. It remained a deep-rooted idolatry.

Before the time of Mohammed there was in Arabia no common central government. Each tribe, whether it wandered in the desert or lived an urban life, was self-governing. Every free-born Arabian had his tribe, and claimed its protection. If he misbehaved grossly he might be disowned, but until he was disowned the tribe was responsible for his action and protected his person. If a member of a tribe was slain, either the were-gild must be accepted and paid, or blood must atone for blood. The blood feud, the vendetta, was the curse of Arabia. A thoughtless insult, an unpremeditated blow, might involve tribes in years of retaliatory warfare. But for the rigid

ROMAN EMPIRE

AND THE BARBARIANS ABOUT THE TIME OF CONSTANTINE 350 A.D.

the two cities. Mohammed returned to Mecca and was taken care of by his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib. Two years later the old man died and left the guardianship of the child to Abu Talib, Mohammed's uncle. Abu Talib was a poor man with many responsibilities, but he treated his orphan nephew kindly and was faithful to his trust.

When Mohammed was twelve years of age he accompanied 582.
his uncle on a caravan journey to Syria. The journey lasted several months, the caravan going to Bozra (Bostra), a busy city on the road to Damascus. Probably Mohammed accompanied various Meccan caravans after this time, and saw several foreign countries. The Koran shows an acquaintance with travelling which must have been acquired at this time. He speaks of the Euphrates and of Egypt. It is probable that he had seen the Dead Sea and sailed upon the Red Sea.

Mohammed was not educated in the ordinary sense. He was not taught as a child to read or write, and what knowledge of letters he gained in after years must have been slight. But he had a capacity for picking up information and for utilising it. And there was a great deal of miscellaneous information to be picked up on a caravan journey, conversing with the merchants and the strangers who attached themselves to caravans for the sake of safety, and listening to the tales told round the camp fires. On his journeys Mohammed saw Christian churches and monasteries, and passed through various Jewish settlements. With the Jews especially he had intercourse, and his knowledge of Christianity, which was strangely incorrect, seems to have been largely obtained from Jewish sources. Conversing with Jews he learned the narratives of the Old Testament, and acquired a sort of Biblical phraseology which gives a tone to the Koran. But the lack of accuracy in his information reveals itself, as, for instance, when he thinks that Mary the sister of Moses and Mary the mother of Jesus are the same.

When twenty-five years of age Mohammed went with a caravan to Syria in charge of the merchandise of Khadija, a

widow. She was pleased with his management of her affairs, and a friendship sprang up between them which led to marriage. Khadija was older than Mohammed, and had been married twice before, but she was a good woman and had an excellent influence on his early life. She bore him two sons and four daughters. The sons died in childhood and the daughters were not long-lived, though the youngest, Fatima, saw her fortieth year. When Mohammed found that he was not likely to have a son to succeed him, he adopted Ali, a young cousin, son of Abu Talib, the uncle who had shown him so much kindness.

As Khadija was wealthy Mohammed had leisure, and he spent much time in meditation. His favourite subjects for meditation were theological, the religious condition of his countrymen greatly exercising his mind. Certainly there was enough in this to disquiet a thoughtful man. Doubtless there were in Arabia some whose hearts turned towards the great author of their existence, and who worshipped Him in sincerity and in truth. But the mass of the people were in dense spiritual darkness. Vice, infanticide, highway robbery, drunkenness abounded. And their gods, what were they? Three hundred and sixty-five deities in the Kaaba, blocks of wood. True there were in Arabia both Jews and Christians. These professed not to worship idols, and spoke of the one living and true God. But they were foreigners, they made few converts, and their creeds, so far as Mohammed could piece them together, were contradictory and confusing.

After much pondering Mohammed came to the conclusion that all men had gone astray, that all had departed from the truth as it had been revealed. Jews, Christians, Arabian idolaters had alike forgotten the great first cause, Allah Taâla, the Most High God. He must begin there. There is one God. He was right. He had reached the rock of eternal truth. Would that he had rested upon it.

For a time Mohammed was content to preach against idol worship. That was no easy task, for he was in a nation of

idolaters, and in a city consecrated to idolatry. If idols were not to be worshipped, what would become of the Kaaba? If the Kaaba ceased to attract, what would become of Mecca? And who was he who thus dared to speak against the worship of his ancestors? Mohammed, the camel-driver, a man who could scarcely write his own name.

Mohammed gained adherents but slowly. Khadija his wife supported him loyally; an old man Waraka, who died soon afterwards, is said to have given him his blessing; Zeid, his freeman; Ali, his adopted son, a child of eleven, and Abu Bekr, a well-to-do cloth merchant, accepted his teaching. These were adherents, with the exception perhaps of Waraka we cannot speak of them as converts. Conversion implies a change of heart, and of this neither Mohammed nor his followers had any experience. In declaring that there was but one God Mohammed enunciated a great truth, but farther than that he could neither go himself nor lead his followers. There is nothing in Mohammed's life to show that his heart was touched by his doctrine. He had no personal knowledge of the God whom he proclaimed. Whilst he lived in Mecca he walked circumspectly, for he had no alternative, but when he got the upper hand he showed himself bloodthirsty, revengeful, cunning and impure. Mohammed was intellectually correct, but intellectual correctness is of small account in dealing with the God who sees the heart. The humblest worshipper in the Kaaba who turned with a broken heart to such vision of God as he had and prayed that his sins might be forgiven was nearer God than the intellectually correct "prophet".

From an early period in his ministry Mohammed adopted the rôle of a prophet. He had heard much of Moses and of Jesus, and he knew that they claimed to be divinely inspired. They were messengers from God, and had produced revelations from Him, why should not he do the same? The world had wandered from their teaching and needed to be recalled. He would recall it, he, Mohammed, the last and greatest of the prophets.

There is no need to imagine that Mohammed was insincere in desiring to place himself upon this level. He was merely an ignorant man with only the most crude hearsay knowledge of the subjects he discussed. His knowledge of Christianity was curiously vague. So ignorant was he of the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, redemption through the death of the Son of God, that he thought himself to be defending Christianity when he contended that Jesus never was crucified, but one resembling Jesus, and mistaken by the Jews for him. In claiming, therefore, to be the successor of Moses and Christ, and a greater than either, it did not occur to him that he was doing anything out of the way. Several so-called prophets had arisen in Arabia before Mohammed; indeed there was one in Central Arabia at that very time of whom tradition makes Mohammed a pupil.

Having claimed inspiration, Mohammed felt bound to produce specimens of his power. Here again the ignorance of the man was his strength. Had he been able to read the Scriptures something of their unapproachable grandeur might have dawned upon his soul. Haply, indeed, he might have seen how fully they met the wants of his own people. Had he been acquainted with books of any sort he would have seen how much he had to learn. But, entrenched in sublime ignorance, he sat self-satisfied and dictated the scraps which have been preserved for us in the book known as the Koran. The Koran was not wholly composed by Mohammed. Some of the best sentiments may, it is believed, have been added by enthusiastic followers after his death when his utterances were being collected. It is also probable that had Mohammed lived to superintend the collection of his utterances he would have carefully edited some of the suras (or chapters) before sending them forth to the world. But we have to take the Koran as we find it. It is not wholly contemptible. There are bright bits in it here and there. But a brief study of its contents will convince any reasonable man that to even discuss the question of inspiration in connection with it would be to insult the Most High. Mohammed, how-

ever, was well satisfied with his work, nay, proud of it. When the unbelieving demanded a miracle, Mohammed pointed to his compositions, and asked whether work of that sort could be produced without superhuman aid. One man, Al-Nadir Ibn Harith, said it could be, and produced work done in the same style. His writings were publicly read and approved. But Al-Nadir had better have left the matter alone. He was made prisoner at Mohammed's first battle, the battle of Badr, and though most of the prisoners were released Al-Nadir was executed out of hand. Mohammed would have no competitor.

Though Mohammed gained adherents very slowly, yet he made progress enough to annoy his fellow-townsmen. He adopted a benign and dignified manner, wore a veil, and could only be seen by appointment. His followers met with more or less secrecy in the house of a disciple who lived outside Mecca. The meetings partook of the nature of modern *séances*, sometimes Mohammed was covered with a blanket, and received a new revelation, sometimes old revelations were again recited. Zealous disciples learned the revelations by heart. Rules concerning the times and attitudes of prayer were laid down. At first the system had the charm of a secret society, with a spice of danger not without attraction to some. How the name of "Moslem" came to be used we hardly know; it was probably given at first in ridicule, for it seems to mean "traitor," but Mohammed adopted it, and gave it a new significance. The name which the members themselves favoured for their society was "Islam," a word signifying absolute submission to God.

As adherents increased enemies also increased. Mohammed was attacking the national religion, and declaring that the gods they worshipped were no gods. The general impression in Mecca was that the man was mad. Open persecution began. The influence of Abu Talib saved Mohammed himself from personal violence, but most of his followers were in poor circumstances, and they suffered persecution. Mohammed had to help some of them financially, and Khadija's wealth came in useful. At last he advised those who could get away to

emigrate to Abyssinia, and many did so. The Abyssinians professed Christianity, and received the refugees with kindness. The Meccans sent an embassy to the Negus, asking that they might be extradited, but the Negus declined to interfere.

Mohammed's most important disciples were Abu Bekr and Omar. It might almost be said that but for Abu Bekr there would never have been any Mohammedanism, and that but for him it would have died with Mohammed. Abu Bekr was a true hero-worshipper, and his persuasion was the chief means of winning adherents in the beginning. After Mohammed's death, when Islam was falling to pieces, he saved it by uniting the tribes of Arabia into a great plundering fraternity, and turning them loose upon the world.

Omar was a later acquisition. He was a swashbuckler, but not without good points. He struck his sister because she joined Islam, and then was so vexed with what he had done that he joined Islam himself. His first overtures were received with alarm, it was thought that he meant mischief. But he proved to be loyal, and Mohammed made him one of his cabinet council, and issued his instructions in the names of "I, Abu Bekr and Omar".

Omar's accession inspired confidence amongst the disciples. He was a man of great physical strength, and not very particular as to the use he made of it. He could be very cruel at times. He was a coarse, rough man, and when he changed from a persecutor to a convert the disciples were greatly encouraged. They could now perform their prayers in public places, even in the precincts of the Kaaba.

The Meccans, exasperated at the turn affairs had taken, now resolved to boycot the Hashim clan until they turned their unruly member adrift. Yet, though the Hashimites disliked Mohammed, such was Arab fidelity to family ties, that they stood out against the ban for two or three years. At the end of that time the others were tired of being unkind, and a compromise was effected. Mohammed conceded the intercessory value of certain favourite Meccan gods, and the Meccans de-

clared themselves satisfied. But Mohammed found that he had compromised himself. Such of his supporters as were sincerely opposed to idol-worship objected to the concession, and he had to retract. This made the opposition more implacable than ever.

Khadija, Mohammed's wife, and Abu Talib, his uncle, died 619.
in the same year, and in them Mohammed lost two excellent friends. Khadija encouraged her husband, and stood by him loyally from the beginning. Her means gave him leisure, her sympathy sustained him, her wisdom kept him on right lines. So loyal had Khadija been to him, that whilst she lived he dared not bring other women to his home. After her death he changed for the worse. Within two months he married a second wife, within the year he was betrothed to a third, and after that, paying no regard to the rules which he himself had laid down in the Koran, he gave the reins to his lusts.

The loss of Abu Talib was scarcely less serious than that of Khadija. Abu Talib never believed in Mohammed, but he would not desert the nephew whom he had reared. For forty years he befriended him, and for several years he actively interposed between him and his enemies. On his death-bed he commended him to the protection of the rest of the family, but how much that might mean none could tell.

Mohammed's means were now straitened. When he married Khadija she was rich, and her purse was at her husband's disposal. But before she died most of her substance had been spent.

So critical was Mohammed's position that he decided to leave Mecca and try his fortune in another city. First he thought of Taif, a prosperous city about sixty miles to the east. He went there and interviewed the chief men. But 620.
they would have none of him, and he had to fly, chased from the town with stones. It may be that at this time he thought of following his people to Abyssinia, and had he done so it would have been better for the world. But circumstances turned his mind towards Medina.

Medina or Yathrib, originally a Jewish colony, had long been in the possession of Arab tribes, of whom two, the Aus and the Khazraj, were continually at war. The city was weary of civil strife, and ripe for the intervention of any one who would bring peace. Unlike the Meccans they had no special financial interest in idol-worship, and there were so many Jews amongst them that they were accustomed to hear it condemned. Mohammed was not altogether a stranger to Medina. His father's maternal relatives belonged to their city, and his father was buried there.

It happened that Mohammed had an opportunity of expounding his doctrines to some Medina pilgrims, and they listened with appreciation. Encouraged by their attitude he asked them whether they would protect him if he came to Medina. They promised to consult their friends and report at the next pilgrimage.

621. Next year they reported favourably. Twelve pilgrims pledged their faith to Mohammed, and they promised to do still better if he would wait another year. Mohammed now sent a missionary to Medina: Musab, a young and zealous convert, who could recite the Koran, and knew how to conduct religious exercises in Moslem fashion. Under Musab the cause flourished, and when the time of pilgrimage came round
622. again more than seventy adherents pledged themselves. A secret meeting was held by night, and Abbas, Mohammed's uncle, and head of the clan, handed him over formally to their protection.

The Meccans heard something of what was going on, and renewed their persecution. A general emigration of Mohammed's adherents ensued, and, within two months, from one to two hundred had fled to Medina. At last only Mohammed, Abu Bekr, and Ali remained. When these knew that the others were safe they prepared for flight. The Kuraish held a council, and appointed a deputation to see Mohammed, but he, fearing imprisonment or worse, evaded them, and escaped with Abu Bekr, Ali remaining to cover the retreat.

The two friends hid for three days in a cave south of Mecca, and, as the road to Medina stretched northward, their pursuers were baffled. When they learned that the pursuit was at an end, they mounted swift camels, made a circuit, and got away safely. This is the year of the "Hijra," or emigration, from which all Moslem dates are reckoned.

CHAPTER III.

MEDINA.

622. MOHAMMED rested for a few days at Kuba, a village outside Medina, and there Ali joined him. Medina was called Yathrib at this time; the name Medinat-al-Nabi, "the city of the prophet," is of later date. Mohammed had now many disciples in the city, and was received by them with enthusiasm. The other citizens, little imagining what the future would bring forth, were interested and hospitable. Temporary homes were provided, a place suitable for a mosque was found, and the refugees settled down.

The mosque built at Medina was simple in character; a courtyard and shed lightly thatched, and a roof supported on wooden pillars, against one of which Mohammed leaned when he was preaching. Afterwards a pulpit was introduced. As public worship was at fixed hours, and there were no clocks among the refugees, an Ethiopian named Bilal called them to prayer. The Jews used a trumpet, the Christians a gong or bell, the Moslems the human voice. The shed was used not only for worship but for the transaction of Mohammed's business and as an audience chamber.

Alongside the mosque quarters were provided for Mohammed's household. He had but one wife for the moment, Sauda. He was betrothed to Ayesha, aged nine, and she went to live with him shortly after his arrival in Medina. She developed into a keen-witted woman, and remained his favourite wife to the end. When he had many other wives and they complained that Ayesha had more than her share of his affections, he silenced them with a pretended revelation.

Khadija had left four daughters, Rukayyah, Zeinab, Umm

Kulthum and Fatima. Of these Zeinab remained in Mecca with her husband, the others were in Medina.

Had Medina been like the cities to which we are accustomed, Mohammed and his adherents would have soon merged with the population and become subject to the common law. But in Arabian cities each tribe lived in its own district and was governed by its own elders. Hence the refugees settled down by themselves, with Mohammed as their chief.

The refugees showed their chief great reverence. They treasured the clippings of his hair and nails, and sometimes even drank the water he washed in. Mohammed kept up his dignity and surrounded himself with court etiquette. It was the more necessary as his dwelling was in such a frequented place.

Mohammed led public prayers in the mosque, and attendance was compulsory. The others stood in rows behind him imitating his movements. New suras were produced from time to time and recited in the mosque. They criticised current events and were the medium of legislation. There would have been little to say against them had not Mohammed professed that they were inspired.

When Mohammed came to Medina he tried to win recognition from the Jews. From the beginning he had partially identified his system with theirs, adopting Old Testament narratives, appealing to Jewish witness, and even observing the Fast of Atonement. Had the Jews acknowledged him as a prophet they would have retained his friendship. Unfortunately for them they scarcely took pains to conceal their contempt. Mohammed's friendship, therefore, turned to hate, they were an annoyance to him and a menace, for their very schoolboys could expose his ignorance. He determined to destroy them or drive them out of his way. About eighteen months after his arrival in Medina he first showed signs of his determination. It had been his rule to turn towards Jerusalem when in the attitude of prayer, but he suddenly changed this custom and turned towards Mecca, declaring that he had re-

ceived a revelation to that effect. He also substituted the Fast of Ramadan for the Fast of Atonement. The Fast of Ramadan is observed to this day. But it is only a fast in name. From sunrise to sunset the Moslems taste neither food nor water, it is true, but from sunset to sunrise they indulge in revelry. During the day they sleep off the effects of the revelry of the night.

The refugees, now thrown upon their own resources, were often in dire poverty. Those who had any means left helped the rest until all were poor together. They earned a crust as they best could. Ali carried water at a date a bucket, Abu Bekr peddled clothes, Othman fruit, others milk, and so on. Often enough they lacked bread. They were ready for desperate deeds.

The caravan trade of Mecca was very valuable. Year after year at certain seasons the caravans passed to and from Mecca and Syria. Medina lay temptingly near the route, and Mohammed resolved that if his followers could not thrive by honest labour they should by plundering. They had friends in Mecca with whom they corresponded, and it was easy to learn when caravans were about to start or were expected soon to arrive.

Up to this point there is room for difference of opinion with regard to the character of Mohammed. Had he continued, as many a true man has done, to bear poverty for the sake of principle, there would have remained room for difference of opinion. But from the moment when he elected to live by plundering it is not easy to see how honest men can differ with regard to his character. Whatever his inclinations may have been in the beginning he now became a highway robber of the worst type, one who broke truce and did not stop short of assassination.

623. The first attempts at robbery made by the refugees were failures, but the men learned discipline, and gained confidence in each other. The sacred months were a sad trouble, for during these the best of the caravans passed. But Mohammed

had a revelation permitting him to disregard such small matters, and after that all went well.

News reached Medina that a caravan of special importance 624.
was returning from Syria, led by Abu Sufyan, the chief citizen of Mecca. Mohammed set out to attack it with 350 men, but Abu Sufyan was warned, and by forced marching got out of danger. Meanwhile the Meccans had heard of his peril and gone to his relief. Though they learned that the caravan was safe they went on, determined to punish the raiders. But when the forces met at Badr the Moslems were victorious.

Mohammed was not a brave man and, like many who are not brave, he was cruel. He gloated over the dead, taunting them as their bodies were thrown into a ditch. When the head of a special enemy was cast at his feet he said: "It is more acceptable to me than the choicest camel in Arabia". Out of forty-nine prisoners two were executed in cold blood. They were both men who had wounded his pride, One was Al-Nadir, the reciter, who has been already mentioned. The other was a man called Ukbah. Before he was cut down he cried out: "Who will take care of my little girl?" "Hell-fire," replied Mohammed.

The victory of Badr was a turning-point in Mohammed's career. Had he been defeated his enemies in Medina would have taken heart. But the victory, and, above all, the booty, brought many over to his side.

After Badr, Mohammed degenerated with rapidity. His spies were everywhere, and men were ready to assassinate at his command. A woman in the city had written satirically about him. A Moslem plunged his sword through her body as she lay asleep. Next day at morning prayer Mohammed welcomed the murderer with effusion. He asked if there would be trouble. "None," said Mohammed, "two goats will not knock their heads about it." An aged Jew who dared to protest against tyranny was murdered in the same way. A reign of terror had begun.

Shortly after the Battle of Badr Mohammed had a quarrel

with the Banu Kainuka, the Jewish goldsmiths of Medina. The quarrel arose out of a drunken row in which Mohammed's uncle Hamza was a chief actor. Mohammed had been insulted by his uncle, and the Jews had shown their contempt for the whole family somewhat too openly. Accordingly he attacked their settlement, and after a fortnight's resistance they somewhat pusillanimously surrendered at discretion. With extraordinary brutality Mohammed ordered that they should be massacred, but Abdallah, who had been chief man in Mecca before Mohammed's advent, insisted on the order being cancelled. At last Mohammed changed the sentence into exile. "Let them go," he said, "God curse them, and you also."

Great spoil resulted from the outrage on the Banu Kainuka, and the Moslems found themselves in the possession of habitations and comparative wealth.

The drunken scene of which mention has been made had one result which must be considered satisfactory, the abolition of the use of intoxicating liquors among the Moslems. The date of the prohibition is uncertain, but it became the subject of a revelation, and Moslems who had not got rid of their liquor after warning had been given were compelled to pour it out. The use of wine was forbidden even as medicine, or in the form of vinegar. Though there is still drunkenness among the Moslems, especially among the wealthier classes, Mohammed's prohibition has been on the whole remarkably effective.

The dangers to which their caravans were now exposed led the Meccans to try another road, and a heavily laden caravan was sent by the new route. It was in vain; Mohammed's spies sent him word, and the expedition which he sent to attack the caravan returned with much booty.

Mohammed was now a rich man, so he added Hafsah, the daughter of Omar, to his harem. To Othman, a leading follower, who had married his daughter, Rukayyah, who was now dead, he gave another daughter, Umm Kulthum, to wife. Fatima, his youngest daughter, he gave to Ali, his nephew.

Hasan and Hosein, the sons of Ali and Fatima, were afterwards very famous in Moslem history.

The Meccans, perceiving that their commerce would be ruined if they did not take action, determined to attack Medina. Three thousand strong they marched, Abu Sufyan leading. The rival armies met at Uhud, and the Meccans, numerous though they were, were broken at the first charge. But the Moslems fell too quickly to plundering, and Khalid, a Meccan leader, who had kept his cavalry in hand, charged upon the Moslem rear and turned the tide of battle. The Meccans recovered, the Moslems fled. Mohammed was wounded, but the cry that he was slain saved his life. He was huddled by Ali into a ravine, and kept there until the danger was past. Had the Meccans been well led in this battle they might have made an end of Islam. But instead of fighting to a finish, they rested content with the advantage they had gained, and set out for home. On the way back they realised their mistake, and some would have turned, but it was too late.

The defeat at Uhud weakened Mohammed's influence among the unbelievers for a time, but a revelation explained it to the rest. Some small excursions were organised to cheer the downhearted, and a few special enemies were silenced by assassination.

When money ran short again Mohammed once more turned to the Jews. This time he picked a quarrel with the Banu Nadir, and besieged their quarter. When they had seen the specially fine date-palms, by the cultivation of which they lived, cut down, they surrendered, and were permitted to go into exile. As there had been no bloodshed, their possessions went to Mohammed, who disposed of them as he saw fit.

About this time Mohammed tried the faith of his followers by adding Zainab, wife of Zaid, his adopted son, to his harem. By Easterns such marriages were highly disapproved, and Mohammed had himself legislated against them. But Zaid preferred not to oppose his patron's amorous inclinations, and divorced his wife. A revelation did the rest.

"When thou saidst to him on whom God hath bestowed favour, and upon whom thou too hast bestowed favours: 'Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear God'; and thou concealest in thy mind what God was about to make known, and thou fearedest man—whereas God is more worthy that thou shouldest fear him. And when Zaid had fulfilled her divorce, we joined thee in marriage unto her, that there might be no offence chargeable to believers in marrying the wives of their adopted sons, when they have fulfilled their divorce; and the command of God is to be fulfilled" (Sec. xxxiii.).

Mohammed was now getting on in years, and had six wives, mostly young. Evidently they needed watching, so the seclusion of the purdah and veil were enjoined. As usual, the instruction came from heaven.

"And when ye ask anything of his women, ask it of them from behind a curtain, that will be more pure for your hearts and for their hearts. It is not fitting for you that ye give uneasiness to the Apostle of God" (Sec. xxxiii.).

And again: "O prophet! Speak unto thy wives and thy daughters, and the wives of the believers, that they throw around them a part of their mantles. This will be more seemly that they may not be subject to annoyance; for God is gracious and merciful" (Sec. xxxiii.).

The seclusion and veiling of women have become integral parts of Mohammedanism, and are practically essential where polygamy is practised, and where there is unlimited facility of remarriage and divorce. Men and women cannot be trusted to mingle freely when every man, married or unmarried, can look upon every woman, married or unmarried, as a possible wife.

627. As the Moslem raiding still went on, the Meccans once more gathered their forces to attack Medina. Adjacent Arab tribes joined them, and they set out 10,000 strong. Mohammed had a large following, but did not venture to face so large an army in the field, and persuaded the people of Medina to dig a great trench round their city. The trench effectually checked the

Meccans, and when they had demonstrated for some days, and found that the Moslems would not come out to fight them, the weather also being stormy, they went home. The last chance of breaking Mohammed's power was thus wasted for lack of competent leadership.

The Banu Kuraizah, the only Jewish tribe now remaining in Medina, had sympathised with the Meccans, though they did not dare to render them active assistance. On the departure of the Meccan army Mohammed wreaked his vengeance on them. They were besieged, and after a brief resistance capitulated, expecting no greater doom than exile. But the order went forth, for the men death, for the women and children slavery. Trenches were dug in the market-place, and, Mohammed superintending, the captives were brought forth in companies, five or six at a time, their hands tied behind their backs, and, kneeling on the brink of the trench, were beheaded and cast in. One aged Jew was offered his life. "Nay," he said, "leave me not to that bloodthirsty man who has killed all dear to me. Slay me also, I entreat." And Mohammed answered, "Yea, let him join them in the fire of hell".

When eight hundred victims had been thus disposed of, and the earth smoothed over their remains, Mohammed returned from the massacre. He had been attracted by the beauty of Raihana, a captive Jewess, and she was set apart for him. He asked her to be his wife, but she said: "Nay, let me be thy slave; it will be easier".

The frequent division of spoil among the Moslems made them rich, and induced many to join their ranks. The rest, terrified, held their peace.

Having by these unscrupulous methods consolidated his 628.
power at Medina, Mohammed turned towards Mecca. Six years had passed since he left that city, but his spies had kept him well informed of its concerns. His relatives were there, and there were some who argued that it would be better to come to terms with them. They were flattered when he

acknowledged the sanctity of their city by turning towards it in prayer. The way in which Mohammed brought the Meccans over to his side is a strong argument against his sincerity. He found a way of grafting the worship of the Kaaba into his system, and thus showed how superficial was his objection to idolatry. He had but one God, it is true, but that God was himself.

Apparently oblivious of the fact that he was thus giving the lie to all the professions of his early life he now organised a pilgrimage to the Kaaba. Fifteen hundred men accompanied him, all professing to come as pilgrims, and with peaceful intent. But when they reached the precincts their way was barred by an armed force. Negotiations ensued, a truce was arranged, and an agreement entered into. Mohammed undertook to retire peacefully, on condition that he might return the year following. Mecca would then be evacuated for three days, and he and his followers, being unarmed, would be permitted to perform the customary rites.

Mohammed had acted wisely, but his followers grumbled, and he had to find a way of satisfying them. Accordingly he organised another plundering expedition, this time against Khaibar, the richest village in the province. Khaibar was a Jewish colony, and Mohammed's experience of the Jews had not impressed him with their fighting qualities.

With 1,400 men Mohammed set out, and reached Khaibar by forced marches. The people were taken by surprise, but fought better than had been expected. At last they yielded. Khaibar was too far away to be occupied by his followers, so Mohammed left the villagers in their holdings, but made them subject to a tax of half their produce. Their portable goods he carried away as booty. Safiyah, a famous beauty, was reserved for his harem, her father, husband, and brothers having first been murdered in cold blood, lest they should stand in his way. A Jewess of Khaibar tried to poison him, but failed.

The spoil of Khaibar made the Moslems rich, the more, as other villages, dreading attack, hastened to make terms.

If we seek for a time when Islam became the open enemy of the human race we may find it now. Hitherto Mohammed might have pleaded necessity or revenge as an excuse for his iniquities. But Khaibar was 100 miles north of Medina, and its people had never crossed his path. He attacked it for plunder alone.

That Mohammed's views regarding conquest were widening is shown by the fact that about this time he sent letters to various potentates, demanding that they should acknowledge his mission. Among the rulers thus distinguished were Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor; Chosroes, king of Persia; the king of Abyssinia, and the governor of Alexandria. A document has been discovered which may be the actual letter sent to Egypt, and the others were probably in the same vein. It is sealed with the words: "Mohammed, the prophet of God," and runs as follows:—

"In the name of Allah, the Rahman, the Merciful. From the Apostle of Allah to the Mukaukis, chief of the Copts. Peace be upon him who follows the guidance. Next, I summon thee with the appeal of Islam. Become a Moslem and thou shalt be safe. God shall give thee thy reward twofold. But if thou decline, then on thee is the guilt of the Copts. O ye people of the Book, come unto an equal arrangement between us and you, that we should serve none save God, associating nothing with Him, and not taking one another for Lords besides God. And if ye decline, then bear witness that we are Moslems" (Margoliouth, *Mohammed*, p. 365).

It is said that Heraclius received the letter politely, that Chosroes tore it up in a rage, and that the king of Abyssinia expressed agreement with Mohammed so far as he could understand his views. The governor of Alexandria gave the ambassador a favourable reception, and sent presents, a white mule and two Coptic maidens. Well pleased, Mohammed took Mary, one of the maidens, into his harem. It made trouble amongst his wives, but a revelation from heaven put that right. By Mary he had a son, but the child died.

629. The time had now come for the promised pilgrimage, and Mohammed set out at the head of 1,200 Moslems. Two hundred horsemen accompanied the party, bringing a stock of arms with them for fear of accidents. They waited on guard outside the sacred territory until the others had finished their pilgrimage, and then performed the ceremonies in their turn.

The Meccans evacuated the city according to agreement, but stood on the surrounding heights watching the spectacle. Seven circuits of the Kaaba were made, Mohammed leading on his camel, the others following, all reciting together. Next day Bilal, the crier, summoned the pilgrims to prayer in Moslem fashion, and Mohammed led their devotions. It was a strange mixture of idolatry with the pretended worship of the one true God.

During the three days spent in Mecca Mohammed had intercourse with leading citizens, and found arguments which conciliated some. Then he departed, taking with him another denizen for his harem. He had now ten wives and two concubines. The Koran allowed a maximum of four.

Three important men joined Islam after these events; Khalid, who had fought so bravely at Uhud, Amr and Othman. Khalid and Amr became distinguished generals. Othman had been a leading chief in Mecca and custodian of the Kaaba. Mohammed now held a strong position, and Mecca was almost within his grasp.

CHAPTER IV.

LAST YEARS OF MOHAMMED.

MOHAMMED'S visit to Mecca had been in February, and during 629.
the following summer he sent out several marauding expeditions. In the autumn he sent an expedition into Syria which proved of great importance, for it brought the Moslems into contact with Byzantium. One of the envoys who had gone forth with the letters already mentioned had been slain, and Mohammed determined to avenge his death. Accordingly he collected 3,000 men and sent them forth under the command of Zaid. But the district invaded was under Byzantine protection, and when the Moslems came within sight of the enemy they saw that they had to contend with a well-appointed force. They fell back on Mutah and there gave battle. In the enemy's centre were Byzantine infantry, and Arab cavalry on either flank. The Moslems fought well but were over-matched. Three leaders, Zaid, Jafar and Abdalla fell in succession, and Khalid, hastily chosen, could do no more than draw off the beaten survivors and bring them home.

Mohammed had made a ten years' truce with Mecca, but only waited a decent excuse for breaking it. This was provided by a tribal quarrel in Mecca in which blood was shed. The aggrieved persons sought Mohammed's interposition, and he espoused their cause. Abu Sufyan was sent to Medina to represent the other side of the case, but found that Mohammed's mind was made up and that preparations for attacking Mecca were already begun.

Mohammed set out for Mecca with 10,000 men. Abbas, his uncle, joined him on the road, and, as he neared the city, Abu Sufyan sought an interview. Clearly the Meccans had to

choose between submission and destruction, and they chose to submit. A few desperate men held out but were soon chased away and the city was taken almost without bloodshed.

Mohammed did not tarry long in the city. The images surrounding the Kaaba were broken down and the pictures defaced. Public prayer was performed in Moslem fashion. Orders were issued that household gods should be destroyed, and parties of soldiers went round to receive the submission of the adjacent villages.

Though Mohammed destroyed the images he perpetuated the sanctity of Mecca. He saluted the Kaaba and made the seven circuits in the prescribed way. The figures were removed, but the Kaaba was as much an object of worship as ever. And so it remains. The change made by Mohammed was but a change of ritual. Mecca with its Kaaba and its round of ceremonies has never ceased to be a centre of idolatrous worship.

630. The fall of Mecca made a sensation throughout Arabia. The first to be affected were the inhabitants of Taif. Their city was near Mecca, and having driven Mohammed from it with stones they expected little quarter. Accordingly they besought the help of adjacent tribes. Mohammed marched against the confederation, and a battle was fought in the Valley of Hunain. The Moslems won the day, but not without considerable loss. The booty was enormous. Taif was then besieged, but the city was well fortified and provisioned and made a brave resistance, until Mohammed at last lost patience and raised the siege. Afterwards the citizens of Taif thought better of it, and sent deputies to Medina to tender their submission.

630. This year a son was born to Mohammed by Mary the Copt, but the child only lived eleven months. There were domestic jars in the prophet's household which would not be worthy of mention in a history but that he settled them by a revelation which is preserved in the Koran. The prophet's wives were warned that if they remained obstinate he might divorce them and marry a new set.

Mohammed had not quite maintained his early popularity. There had been grumbling, especially when spoil was divided. Mohammed had a way of buying new friends with great gifts, which tried the faith of the older ones. After the battle of Hunain he was mobbed. The domestic scandals also tried the faith of the more respectable of the believers. For these reasons, and because also rumours reached him of hostile gatherings on the Syrian frontier, he resolved upon a military demonstration which would surpass anything yet attempted and divert the minds of his followers. Between 30,000 and 40,000 men were collected, and a march northwards was begun. After a most fatiguing journey they reached Tabuk, a city not far from the Gulf of Akaba. There they learned that the rumours of hostile gatherings were false. That the expedition might not be wholly in vain Mohammed persuaded some of the adjacent communities to promise allegiance, others tribute. Then they marched back.

Next year 300 pilgrims set out for Mecca with Abu Bekr 631.
as chief. This was the first pilgrimage presided over by a Moslem official. Ali accompanied them to read a manifesto to the assembled tribes, said to be a revelation from God to his apostle. The tribes were warned that after four months they would remain idolaters at their peril. The instructions were as follows:—

"And when the forbidden months have elapsed, then fight against the idolaters, wheresoever ye find them; take them captive, besiege them, and lay in wait for them in every ambush". The Meccan pilgrimage was also from henceforth to be purified from the presence of unbelievers.

News of the manifesto spread throughout Arabia and the tribes hastened to conform, dreading the consequences of delay. When once submission became the fashion, men made haste lest rivals might obtain an advantage. A title from Mohammed was now essential to peaceful occupation of territory, and as he was ignorant of local conditions those who came first were best served.

The destruction of images soon ceased to be a difficulty. The Arab was not a religious man in any case. He had worshipped his fathers' gods as a filial duty, but since Mohammed's god was stronger, he did not hesitate to change. And when it was found that the household gods did not retaliate upon their destroyers iconoclasm became popular.

Amongst those who came to make peace with Mohammed at this time were deputies from Najran, an Arabian Christian community. The deputation included the chief man of the community and the bishop. They wished to show Mohammed how near he was to Christianity, and to discuss the points of difference. But Mohammed would have none of their discussions, and fell back upon revelation. When they were still unmoved he proposed a cursing match. "Come," said he, "let us curse each the other." The Christians declined this way of settling theological disputes, fearing lest Mohammed's curses might be carried into effect by Moslem swords. They therefore agreed to pay tribute in the usual way. The Najran Christians remained in possession of their lands until the caliphate of Omar. He expelled them from Arabia, and some settled in Syria, some near Kufa. With another Christian embassy Mohammed made terms, permitting them upon payment of tribute to profess their religion, but forbidding them to baptise their children.

In various ways Mohammed made it clear that Christianity must expect no quarter. The oppressions to which Christians were subjected were so serious, and the temptations held out to converts to Islam so enticing, that most were drawn to the new faith. Such as professed Islam paid a moderate tithe, the Jews or Christians paid sometimes ten times as much. Christians were held in semi-slavery, and soon disappeared from Arabia.

When tribes submitted to Islam, Mohammed did not interfere with their local government. The chiefs were confirmed in their rights, only two officials were sent, one to collect the taxes, the other to conduct religious services.

The manifesto read at Mecca by Ali had served its purpose

well, and Islam had now such a powerful position that Mohammed resolved to conduct the next pilgrimage himself. Accordingly when the time came round he set out accompanied by his household, and followed by a great multitude of people. He performed the ceremonies with special care, that they might be a standard for all succeeding time.

On the second day of the pilgrimage Mohammed addressed the people, sitting on his camel in the Mina valley. Fragments of the discourse have been preserved, and if they are a fair sample there was little worth preserving. The paragraph concerning the treatment of women runs as follows :—

" Ye people ! ye have rights demandable of your wives, and they have rights demandable of you. Upon them it is incumbent not to violate their conjugal faith, neither to commit any act of open impropriety ;—which things if they do, ye have authority to shut them up in separate apartments and beat them with stripes, yet not severely . . . and treat your women well, for they are with you as captives and prisoners ; they have not power over anything as regards themselves."

Mohammed abolished the intercalary method by which Arabian scientists had adjusted the calendar. He declared that the changing of the months was an excess of infidelity, and ordained that the year should consist of twelve lunar months. The Arabian month, therefore, guides as to the condition of the moon but not as to the season of the year.

The profession of Islam made the Arabians more peaceful among themselves. Mohammed insisted that all Moslems should be brethren. This meant much in Arabia where blood feuds had been so common. Unfortunately though Moslem might not war with Moslem, he might war with the rest of the world.

Mohammed was now a busy man. He kept the reins of government in his own hands, and did not spare himself. He received deputies, sent out embassies, and dictated correspondence. He also administered justice, settled the law, and led the public worship. His life had been a hard one, and in his

632. sixty-third year his health showed signs of breaking down. Nevertheless, knowing how necessary it was to keep his followers occupied, he organised an expedition against the Byzantines to avenge the defeat at Mutah. An army was gathered, and Osama, son of that Zaid who had been killed at Mutah, was made general. Before the army could set out Mohammed was taken ill. His wives said it was pleurisy, and he said it was poison. It may have been typhoid, for he was careless about what he drank, having a theory that water could not be contaminated. For several days he struggled to keep on his feet, then he prescribed a cold douche for himself. Convulsions followed, he rapidly sank, and on 7th June died.

The death of Mohammed caused much excitement. Omar went into a frenzy, but Abu Bekr kept his head and calmed the people. Some of the Moslems had evidently believed that their prophet would be immortal. That afternoon the citizens of Medina met to appoint a leader from among themselves, determined to be no longer under the dominion of the refugees. Abu Bekr and Omar hurried to the meeting, and showed them that this would end in chaos, and after a stormy discussion they chose Abu Bekr himself. He had already been indicated by Mohammed as his successor, having been instructed to lead public prayer during his illness.

Abu Bekr was the best choice possible. Had any other been chosen Islam would assuredly have fallen to pieces. But the choice did not give universal satisfaction. Some thought that Ali, Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law, should have been his successor.

Mohammed's body lay in state for twenty-four hours, and was then buried in the house of Ayesha, his favourite wife. Abu Bekr, her father, was afterwards buried in the same apartment, and in time Omar also. Ayesha survived Mohammed forty-seven years.

The character of Mohammed has given rise to much controversy. To us he seems to have been a man who had his chance and missed it. In the beginning of his career he had a

certain spiritual insight. He learned a truth, he saw further than some. Had he taught what he learned with humility, God would have given him more light, and he would have become a prophet indeed. But he put his own glory on an equality with that of God, and the light that was in him became darkness. And how great was that darkness! Since the world began no man has so blighted humanity. Mohammed taught Arabia that there was one God, but the God that he revealed was not the God that rules in heaven. The God of ignorance, of immorality, of slavery, of assassination, of truce breaking, of rapine, of bloody war, that was Mohammed's God. And the heaven that he dangled before the eyes of his followers, was but a house of ill-fame. To crown all, Mohammed concentrated his teaching in "revelations" which he declared to be communicated to him by the Divine Being, knowing well, for he must have known it, that he was forging the name of the Most High.

The most wonderful thing about Islam seems to us to be its permanence. There was nothing wonderful in the establishment of a new religion. Nor was the rapid spread of Mohammedanism wonderful. The exhaustion of Byzantium and Persia sufficiently accounted for that. But the wonder to us is that in the twentieth century there should still be found educated men revering the memory of one so worthless.

It is a mistake to imagine that Mohammedanism is an advance on idolatry. It is itself idolatry of a peculiarly degrading type, the worship of a bad book and a bad man. As for the God whose name is so constantly on Moslem lips, he is not in all their thoughts.

The fruits of Mahommedanism and of idol-worship can be seen, and the merits of the systems compared in countries like British India, where the two religions live side by side. There the Moslem is either a soldier or a servant; positions demanding special intelligence are generally filled by the Hindu. The Moslem is backward because he is denied freedom of thought; is doomed to starve his intelligence, his heart and his spirit

upon a worthless book; and is tied to a code of legislation and a system of worship which originated in the mind of a common-minded, ignorant man. The Hindu, on the other hand, has freedom of thought. He worships the gods of his fathers, but if he is intelligent, they are little more to him than the patron saint is to the Catholic; the true adoration of his heart goes out to the Supreme Being.

Above all, the Hindu realises his sinfulness before God, and seeks the Divine mercy with an earnestness which might often put Christians to shame. And though he may think very imperfectly, and the cry for mercy may ascend from a poor ignorant heart, yet, because it is from the heart, we dare not doubt but that the God who knows the heart hears the cry. For the Moslem there is no self-abnegation, no true repentance, scarcely any sense of sin. Wrapped in his self-satisfied bigotry he stands, thanking God that he is not as other men. Lust and murder his sacred book allows, and if there be any other crime, it is paid for by the eternal parrot-cry: "There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet".

CHAPTER V.

THE EARLY CALIPHS.

MOHAMMED was dead, and Abu Bekr now reigned. He was 632.
father of Ayesha, a man of about the same age as the prophet, and his staunch friend almost from the beginning. He believed in Mohammed, yet just what he did believe it might be hard to say. Mohammed had no confidants, and Abu Bekr was not an accomplice but a disciple.

We have said that some would have preferred that Ali should have succeeded. He seemed to have even a better claim upon the office than Abu Bekr. He had joined Mohammed when a boy of eleven, he also had been staunch, he was husband of Fatima, and their children, Hasan and Hosein, had been greatly beloved by Mohammed. Believers in hereditary succession supported Ali's claim, and looked on Abu Bekr as a usurper. Ali did not press his claims, but he was not cordial. Fatima, however, died within the year, and Ali then fell in with the majority. But the feeling in favour of his claims did not pass away, and we shall see later how, embittered by subsequent events, it led to a permanent cleavage in Islam.

Abu Bekr's first action was to send Osama to Syria on the expedition which Mohammed had proposed. It seemed a rash thing to do, for it left Medina defenceless, and it was quite possible that the death of Mohammed might be followed by a revolution. But Abu Bekr thought the boldest course the safest, and he proved to be right. Osama hastened to Syria, avenged Mutah, and returned triumphant, laden with booty, and ready for fresh service.

Throughout the peninsula there was much apostasy. The

tribes had never relished the supremacy of Mecca and Medina, and they now made a determined effort to shake it off. They would pray as the caliph saw fit, but they would not pay taxes. But Abu Bekr refused to compromise. Summoning the faithful to his standard, and dividing Arabia into districts, he sent out flying columns to subdue the rebellious. The heaviest work fell on Khalid, the chief who had already distinguished himself at Mutah by saving the defeated forces from annihilation. Khalid swept Central Arabia with the sword and overcame all opposition. He was cruel and utterly unscrupulous. He attacked a submissive tribe because its chief had a beautiful wife, slew the chief in cold blood, and wedded his wife on the spot. Complaint went to Medina, and Omar was full of wrath, for the chief was a friend of his, but Abu Bekr dared not dispense with so useful a soldier as Khalid, and condoned the crime.

The expeditions sent to other parts of Arabia were almost equally successful, and within a year of Mohammed's death Islam was re-established. Not that the Arabs were loyal at heart. But they saw that the yoke could not be easily shaken off, and fear kept them quiet. Just then Abu Bekr, consciously or unconsciously, took a step which changed the whole aspect of affairs and welded Islam into one.

Arabia is surrounded on three sides by the sea. Northward lies Syria and the districts watered by the Tigris and Euphrates. The more southern of these districts, that lying on the Arabian frontier, was called Irak of the Arabians to distinguish it from Persia or Irak of the Persians. Very little of the stretch of country lying between Arabia and the Black Sea was independent. It was subject either to Byzantium or Persia, and its suzerainty had been a source of contention between the empires for centuries. Both empires were now extremely weak. Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, had indeed done wonders for a time. He had galvanised Byzantium into activity, and had destroyed the power of Chosroes, king of Persia. But he had now broken down physically, and was no longer able to take

the field. The financial resources of both Byzantium and Persia were greatly impaired; their subjects were discontented; and when collision with the border tribes led Abu Bekr to send troops into the realms governed by these empires, neither empire could render serious resistance. The moment was opportune.

The kindling of the fire of foreign war had a result which Abu Bekr could scarcely have foreseen. It united Arabia. The first battles were successful; wonderful stories of spoil to be had for the taking spread through the peninsula; and tribe after tribe, scenting plunder, offered its services to the caliph, and hastened northward eager for the fray. Sullenness gave place to loyalty: all were willing to fight for Islam, now that fighting for Islam meant rapine, outrage and spoil.

Khalid went north-west and fought his way through Irak 633.
Arabi. The carnage was frightful, many towns were sacked, others surrendered, promising yearly tribute.

Whilst Khalid was carrying all before him in Irak, the campaign in the West against the Byzantines and their Bedouin allies was less successful. Heraclius sent an immense force to the front, and the Moslems were checked. The armies faced one another on the Yermuk River, east of the Sea of Tiberias. When much time had been spent in skirmishing, without definite result, Abu Bekr ordered Khalid to cross the desert and bring matters to a conclusion. On his arrival he forced a 634.
battle, and though the Moslems were greatly outnumbered they fought with such determination that the Byzantines were utterly overthrown. During the battle Khalid received a letter informing him that Abu Bekr was dead, and that Omar, his successor, had deprived him of his command.

In his short reign Abu Bekr had done great things for Islam. He had quelled the insurrection in Arabia and humbled two empires in the dust. Moreover, the Bedouin tribes of Syria, hitherto hostile, now only waited a chance to join the Moslems and share the plunder.

Under Rustem, a general of Khorasan, the Persians put forth their utmost strength. In the first encounter the Moslems were driven back, 4,000 being slain. But reinforcements reached them, and under Motanna, their general, they overthrew
635. the Persians at Boweib, near Kufa. The Persians did not yet give up the struggle. Their young prince, Yezdegird, was placed on the throne, and the nobles rallied round. Motanna had to fall back, and died before he could turn the tide. But Moslem reinforcements arrived, and at Kadesia one of the most terrible of battles was fought. It lasted three days, and the Persians were utterly overthrown. Rustem was slain, Yezdegird fled. The spoil was immense. After Kadesia the Persians ceased to be dangerous, and the Bedouin tribes, hesitating no longer, hastened to join the Moslem ranks.

The Moslems now marched on Damascus. The city held out for some months, but an entrance was made, and the Byzantine governor capitulated in time to save the city from being sacked. Other cities fell in quick succession, Fihl
636. (Pella), Hems (Emesa), Aleppo, and at last Antioch. Heraclius tried to rally the tribes in vain.

Immensely encouraged by their success the Moslems now turned upon Palestine, the chief cities of which were still garrisoned by Byzantine troops. Amr, a Moslem general, defeated the Byzantines at Ajnadein and drove them back on Jerusalem. Gaza, Lydda and Joppa fell, and at last Amr laid siege to Jerusalem itself. The Byzantine general lost heart and withdrew to Egypt, and the patriarch sued for peace. Influenced by an old prophecy he asked that the caliph should himself come to receive the surrender, and Omar crossed the desert. The terms of the surrender were humiliating, but the Christians had no choice. Though severe, Omar was not cruel, for Jerusalem was venerated by the Moslems, standing next to Mecca in their regard. In later years the law concerning the treatment of Jews and Christians in Moslem countries became exceedingly intolerant, and was regulated by a so-called "ordinance of Omar". But Omar was not responsible for this ordinance. It

was of slow growth, and is still law in Mohammedan countries, though not often carried out. During his stay in Jerusalem Omar selected a site for a mosque, made arrangements for the government of Syria, and planned an invasion of Egypt.

Soon all Syria was lost to Christendom. It may seem strange that it should have fallen so quickly. But Byzantium had little hold upon the affections of its subject populations, the Jews and Christians were ever at variance, and the Christians were at variance amongst themselves. The subject peoples, moreover, hoped that the Moslems might prove more indulgent masters than the Byzantines.

In Persia further progress was also made. Under the leadership of Sad the Moslems crossed the Euphrates and cleared the country as far as the Tigris. They then advanced on the royal city of Medain (Ctesiphon), through which the Tigris flowed. Yezdegird abandoned the western city and offered to surrender all territory west of the Tigris if the Moslems would leave him the east. It was a fair offer, but the Moslems would not accept it. They crossed the river by swimming, and the Persians fled panic-stricken. The spoil of Medain was rich beyond conception. When the more distinguished had been rewarded, and the treasury had received its share, there remained enough to make the soldiers independent for life.

Omar would not allow a further advance into Persia at that time. But afterwards the Moslems captured Sus (Shushan) and Yezdegird made another effort. The battle of Nevahend followed, the Persians were utterly routed, and the famous city of Hamadan fell into Moslem hands. The country was re- 642.
duced province by province. Yezdegird was driven across the Oxus and assassinated. With him the male line of the Sassi- 651.
nides became extinct after ruling Persia for four centuries. Great inducements were held out to the Persians to profess Islam, and by degrees it became the religion of the people.

The extraordinary success of the Moslem arms was followed by a constantly increasing national revenue and necessitated

new arrangements for division of the spoil. Omar therefore organised a diwan or exchequer charged with the distribution of the booty. A register was prepared for each tribe, and the booty was divided according to fixed rules. The revenue was enormous, for to spoil had to be added tribute, tithes and assessment of confiscated lands. The Arab race was living upon robbery and blackmail, and the proceeds were divided as scrupulously as if the wealth had been earned by honest trading. The income of the nation depended on successful war, and the chief who could add the spoil of a city or the tribute of a province to the treasury was a public benefactor.

The reduction of Chaldæa and Syria led to the development of two cities, Bassora, in the delta of the Euphrates, and Kufa, near Hira, south of Babylon. These cities were meant to be advanced posts and were richly endowed with confiscated lands. Tempted by the endowments many Arabs migrated to them, and they became large and important. They also became hotbeds of sedition and discontent. Kufa is now a ruin, Bassora still exists.

640. The Moslem eye now fell covetously on Egypt. This country, formerly the granary of Rome, was now the granary of Constantinople, and Alexandria, its capital, was the second city in the Byzantine empire. The capital was cosmopolitan and luxurious, but over the rest of the country there dwelt a poor, hard-working people, ground down by taxation, and thoroughly disloyal. From the Egyptian people as a whole, therefore, Amr, who commanded the Moslem forces, met with little opposition, and soon he was able to lay siege to Alexandria. Heraclius died during the progress of this siege, and
641. as no help came from Byzantium, the citizens surrendered, and promised to pay tribute, on condition that the city should not be sacked.

Amr would have made Alexandria the seat of government for Egypt, but Omar thought it too far away, and an encampment was formed near Memphis, called Fostat at the first, but afterwards Cairo. Some years later, during the caliphate of

Othman, the Byzantines succeeded in wresting Alexandria from the Moslems. Amr besieged it the second time, and when at length he took it by storm, he sacked the city, and 646.
razed its fortifications to the ground. The seat of government was then finally removed to Cairo.

When Mohammed died his so-called revelations existed only in a very fragmentary form. Some were written on palm leaves, some on mutton bones, some more permanently. Mohammed had made no collection, nor any arrangement for preserving his sayings. Some Moslems knew portions of "the reading," for this is the meaning of the word Koran, by heart, but they were a decreasing number. Omar, therefore, fearing that the revelations would be lost, commissioned Zeid, who had been one of Mohammed's secretaries, to collect the fragments and embody them in a volume. Zeid did so. He was painstaking, but his work was crude, and there was difference of opinion concerning some of the readings. Othman, who succeeded Omar, appointed a revision committee, therefore, with Zeid as chairman, and a canonical copy was prepared. To prevent further disputes, the other codices were burned.

When Omar was in his sixtieth year, having reigned ten 644.
years, a Persian captive, who had become a Moslem, appealed to him for justice against his master. Omar refused to interfere, and next day in the mosque the man stabbed him mortally. Omar lingered for several days, and tried to make arrangements as to his successor. When Abd al Rahman, whom he thought most fitting, refused the office, Omar asked Ali, Othman, Zabeir and Sad, to consult with Abd al Rahman, and choose one of their number. Then he died, and was buried in the house of Ayesha, where Abu Bekr and Mohammed already lay.

Words ran high between members of the electoral committee, but at length the choice lay between Ali and Othman. Ali had been husband of Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed, who was dead; Othman had been the husband of Rukayyah and Umm Kulthum, both daughters of Mohammed, but dead also. Ali

was favoured, for he had two sons, of whom Mohammed had been fond, but as he made difficulties concerning the principles which were to guide him in governing, Othman was chosen instead.

We have said that there were many Moslems who believed that the caliphate should have descended in Mohammed's family line, and who thought Abu Bekr and Omar usurpers. Such persons were now doubly exasperated when Ali was again passed over. Both Othman and he were of the Kuraish, but Ali was a Hashim, and Othman was an Ommeyad. Mohammed had been a Hashim, and Abu Sufyan, his chief opponent for so long, was an Ommeyad. There was an old rivalry between the families, the present dispute intensified it, and gradually as we shall see, it led to results of the most lamentable character.

Othman had another source of discontent to deal with The Arab tribes did most of the fighting, the men of Mecca and Medina got most of the plunder. They claimed a virtual monopoly of the official positions and governorships, and looked upon themselves as the aristocracy of Islam. Othman was too much under their influence, he laid himself open to the charge of nepotism, and soon became unpopular. There were rebellions here and there, and he did not grasp the nettle. Indeed he was too old for the caliphate. Kufa and Bassora were now as always, centres of discontent; Egypt was seriously disaffected. Muavia, the governor of Syria, son of Abu Sufyan and nephew of Othman, was loyal, but he was far away. He warned Ali to protect the old man, but Ali nursed his grievance and let things slide. Disaffection spread, insurgent bands marched on Medina and demanded the abdication of Othman
656. The caliph's house was stormed and he was slain. Ali might have saved him, but made little effort. Muavia had sent forces to his help, but, hearing of his death on the march, they returned home.

During Othman's caliphate we hear for the first time of a Moslem fleet. Omar dreaded the sea, and forbade Muavia to

build ships. Othman withdrew the prohibition, and a fleet was built. Its first exploit was the capture of Cyprus. Three 649
years later a Moslem fleet defeated a Byzantine one at Alexandria.

During Othman's caliphate also, after Alexandria had been lost and again captured, the Moslem arms were carried successfully along the northern coast of Africa, almost to Carthage.

CHAPTER VI.

HASAN! HOSEIN!

656. THE assassination of Othman was a senseless crime. An old man of eighty, he would not long have stood between his rivals and their ambition. His murder caused widespread disgust. His blood-stained garment wrapped round the severed fingers of Naila, a faithful wife who had tried to ward off the fatal blow, was carried to Damascus. Muavia hung the garment and fingers on the mosque pulpit, and the spectacle roused the worshippers to frenzy.

For some days anarchy reigned in Medina. There was no caliph, and, as two had been assassinated in succession, it was not easy to get any one to occupy the fatal post. Three names were proposed: Zobeir, who was favoured in Kufa; Talha favoured in Bassora; and Ali. Ali was the most likely, but much as he had coveted the post before, he now dreaded it. Zobeir and Talha were equally reluctant. At last Ali was persuaded, and Talha and Zobeir swore allegiance.

No sooner had Ali become caliph than his troubles began. Zobeir, Talha and other leaders demanded office, and when they did not at once obtain it they stirred up malice against Ali. They now clamoured for vengeance on the murderers of Othman, though not one of them had supported him whilst he lived, or tried to save him when he died. Ali pointed out the helplessness of his position. The insurgents who had slain Othman had come from many parts, from Kufa, Bassora, Egypt. How could he track them down? Moreover, he knew the hypocrisy underlying the demand.

Zobeir and Talha now went to Mecca and made that city a centre of intrigue. Ayesha was there, "the mother of the

faithful". She detested Ali, against whom she had an old grudge. His promotion filled her with bitterness, and though she had conspired against Othman whilst he lived, she gladly joined Zobeir and Talha in trying to overthrow his successor. Ali, brave in the field, was a poor diplomatist, not a good pilot for the ship of state in stormy weather.

The ablest man in the empire at this time was Muavia, the governor of Syria. We have said that he was a son of Abu Sufyan, and nephew of Othman. He had been governor of Cyprus and had captured Rhodes. Omar had appointed him governor of Syria, and Othman continued him in authority. Othman had allowed him to build a fleet, and now the name of Arabian was feared in the Eastern Mediterranean. Since the death of Othman Muavia's influence had greatly increased.

Ali's wisest counsellors advised him not to meddle with Muavia, but Ali hated him and refused to confirm him in his governorship "even for a day". Accordingly he sent another governor in his place. But Muavia declined to relinquish his command, and the substitute was glad to escape with his life.

War with Muavia was now inevitable, but before Ali could cross swords with him he had to deal with rebellion nearer home. Ayesha, Zobeir and Talha set out from Mecca with a rebel army and seized Bassora. Ali followed them, and at Kariba, near Bassora, the famous "battle of the camel" was fought, so named because Ayesha was present throughout seated on a camel and protected by an iron cage. The carnage was great. Talha, Zobeir and 10,000 with them were slain. Ali was victorious. Ayesha, treated with a courtesy which she little deserved, was sent to Medina to end her days in peace.

After the victory of Bassora Ali changed the seat of govern- 657.
ment from Medina to Kufa. From Kufa he marched against Muavia, who, now entirely alienated, had assumed the title of caliph. Making a circuit, Ali invaded Syria from the north, and encountered the army of Muavia at Siffin on the Euphrates. After much desultory fighting there was a pitched battle. It lasted for three days, and Ali was on the point of

victory. Seeing this Muavia furnished his foremost troopers with sheets of the Koran which they fixed upon their lances, shouting "The law of the Lord, let that decide between us". Ali's troops, glad of an excuse to end the fray, joined in the shout, and thus victory was snatched away. Arbitrators were appointed; Muavia got eight months breathing space, and the arbitration came to nought. Worse than all, Ali by entering into the negotiation displeased a section of his soldiers whom he could ill afford to lose. These were the Karejites, who seem to have been a kind of Moslem Puritans. They did not make the allowances for Ali which they well might have done, and
658. went home in wrath. Next year when Ali again took the field against Muavia the Karejites refused to join him and stirred up an insurrection. Ali had to begin the campaign, therefore, by marching against them, and by the time they had been disposed of, his Arab forces were tired of the war and could not be held together. The expedition against Muavia had consequently to be abandoned.

At this time Ali also lost Egypt. He had acted unwisely in changing the governor twice. The second governor, Mohammed, son of Abu Bekr, and brother of Ayesha, was not a strong man, and Amr, the former conqueror and governor of Egypt, easily wrested the province from him. The loss of Egypt preyed upon Ali's mind. He made overtures to Muavia for peace, and would have recognised the divided caliphate, but Muavia felt now so sure of ultimate success that he was unwilling to share the empire.

There were now three rulers in Islam, Ali at Kufa, Muavia at Damascus, and Amr in Egypt. They were competent men; and, in the interest of good government, the division was not unsatisfactory. But Muavia and Ali could not agree, and incessant war went on. Men were distracted with the divided condition of Islam and wondered how it could be reunited. At last three zealots, desperate men, entered into a conspiracy to destroy the chief actors in the drama. Ali, Muavia and Amr were marked for destruction, and simultaneous attempts were

made on their lives in the mosques of Kufa, Damascus and Fostat (Cairo). The day chosen was Friday, the 17th of the month Ramadan, the occasion morning prayer. Amr was not officiating on that day so he escaped, and his deputy was killed; Muavia was severely wounded, but survived; Ali was killed. He was sixty years of age, and had reigned for five years.

Ali had many good qualities; he was a brave man, and he had been most faithful to Mohammed. But he lacked personal magnetism, and had not the spirit and determination necessary for grappling with the difficulties of his position. He made a fatal mistake in not supporting Othman. Had he waited until the old man died in the course of nature, he would have been chosen as successor with general approval. Ali was not very popular while he lived, and after his death for a generation he was held of little account. But as time went on the hard luck of the man, and the cruel fate of his progeny, raised a feeling of profound sympathy with the family, and Ali, who had been made little of during his life, received almost divine honours in after years.

Ali left two sons, Hasan and Hosein, and Hasan, the elder, was chosen as caliph. He was a man of loose character and little merit and is said to have exercised the Moslem power of divorce seventy times. He loved an easy life, and felt himself no match for Muavia. Accordingly he abdicated in his favour on condition that he should have protection for his relatives and a handsome pension for himself. He then retired into private life at Medina where he was poisoned some years after by one of his wives. Tradition declares that Muavia instigated the deed, and Hasan's name is accordingly coupled with that of Hosein as a martyr. But there is no sufficient reason for believing that Muavia had anything to do with his death.

Muavia was now sole caliph, with his capital in Damascus. Though not at first universally acknowledged, he gradually overcame all opposition, and the dynasty of the Ommeyads which he founded lasted for nearly a century. The capital being in Syria, the relative importance of Arabia, and with

it of Mecca and Medina, declined, until they became little more than they are to-day, interesting places for the resort of pilgrims.

Muavia was well served by his generals, and was successful in foreign affairs. In the East much progress was made. Herat was stormed, and Kabul, Ghazni, Balkh and Candahar also fell. Then the Moslems crossed the Oxus and conquered Bokhara. Two years later the Turks were driven out of Khorasan. Other Moslem generals penetrated to the Indus.

In North Africa also the Moslem arms were successful. A formidable army passed from Syria to Alexandria, and then westward towards Tunis. A hundred miles south of ancient
677. Carthage, Okba, the Moslem general, founded the settlement of Kairwan, and strongly fortified it. Some years later he carried his arms victoriously westward through Algiers and Morocco, until he reached the Atlantic. But when he turned he found that the Berbers had risen in his rear, and in the pass of Tehuda his army was surrounded and almost annihilated.

During Muavia's caliphate the Saracens made their first attempt to capture Constantinople. A vast armament was prepared and sent against the city under the leadership of Yezid, Muavia's eldest son. Muavia hoped that Yezid would gain glory from the enterprise. But no glory was gained. Constantinople was as yet too strong for the Moslem arms, and although the war lingered for several years, and the districts surrounding the city were ravaged again and again, the besiegers could make no impression upon the city itself. Slowly the attacking army melted away under the influence of disease and battle, and at last retreat became imperative. The retreat was not less disastrous than the siege. The fleet was broken to pieces by storms, and the land army, discouraged and demoralised, was cut to pieces by the pursuing Byzantine
678. troops. Muavia was now thankful to make a treaty with Byzantium, and even to promise tribute in return for peace.

As the election of caliph had given rise to so much trouble in the past, and Muavia was anxious that his son Yezid should

succeed him, he declared him heir-apparent, and required the chief of the people to swear allegiance. Most did this without demur, a few refused, amongst whom were Hosein, son of Ali, and Abdalla, son of Zobeir.

Muavia died at the age of seventy-five, and was buried in 680.
Damascus. He had failed at Constantinople, but otherwise his caliphate had been to the glory of Islam.

Yezid now became caliph without election, though not without trouble. Abdalla, son of Zobeir, raised the standard of revolt at Medina. Hosein retired to Mecca, where he was surrounded by friends.

The people of Kufa sent embassies begging Hosein to claim his rights, and promising enthusiastic support. Hosein had little confidence in them, but when embassy after embassy came, and a list of more than 100,000 supposed supporters was placed in his hands he thought he might take the risk. Accordingly he set out for Kufa with his entire household, and a trifling body-guard of forty horse and a hundred foot.

Before Hosein reached Kufa he was met by friends from whom he learned that he had made a mistake. The governor of the city had called the people together and warned them of the consequences of revolt, and their courage evaporated. Yezid also had heard of Hosein's enterprise, and had taken his precautions.

Still Hosein went on, not towards Kufa indeed, but skirting the district. He felt that retreat was impossible, and hoped that those who had invited him would not prove utterly faithless. But his hopes were not fulfilled. Instead of friends, foes met him, and at Kerbela, twenty-five miles north of Kufa, his little band was surrounded by 4,000 men. He might perhaps have even yet saved his life by laying down his arms, and taking the oath of allegiance to Yezid, but he preferred to die. He begged his followers to consult their own safety by retiring, but they refused to abandon him, and indeed thirty men actually deserted from Yezid's ranks and joined his devoted band.

Next day, the tenth of Moharram, the tiny force was surrounded. They made a rampart and fought desperately, 200 against 4,000; but were cut down until all but a few women and children lay dead on the field. Hosein was the last to be slain. Seventy heads, including his, were carried to Kufa, and thrown at the governor's feet. "Gently," said an aged spectator, "it is the prophet's grandson. By the Lord! I have seen these very lips kissed by the blessed mouth of Mohammed."

The few women and children who survived the massacre were sent back to Medina, where the story they had to tell aroused wild lamentation. Soon it spread over the empire, and with ever-increasing effect. Hosein was in arms against the lawful caliph, it is true, but his rebellion might have been suppressed without the annihilation of Mohammed's descendants. Ali's claim to rule, formerly regarded with indifference, was now favourably considered, and his character was lauded, until a commonplace man was transfigured into a hero. As for Hosein, he became the most glorious of martyrs.

The pathetic story of the "Family of the tent" is dramatised and acted throughout the Moslem world every year, as the anniversary comes round. Those who have seen the spectacle can never forget it, the long wailing procession, with, at intervals, its groups of hired mourners, often stripped to the waist, and beating their breasts raw, keeping time to the frantic cry of "Hasan! Hosein! Hasan! Hosein!" To such a pitch of excitement are the Moslems still wrought, that even now, after twelve centuries, governments are glad when the tenth day of Moharram is safely past.

Hosein was dead, but Yezid was not yet at peace. Abdalla, the son of Zobeir, though Hosein's rival whilst he lived, now that he was dead, cried out for vengeance. Abdalla was clever, and soon had Mecca and Medina in a ferment; they declared him caliph, and swore allegiance. It was necessary that strong measures should be taken. Accordingly an army was sent to attack Medina and Mecca. Medina was captured
682. and for three days given up to the licence of the soldiery.

The force then proceeded to Mecca and laid siege. The siege lasted for two months, the city being bombarded with stones 683.
and burning naphtha, and the Kaaba was burned to the ground. When the third month of the siege had begun, news came that Yezid was dead, and that his son Muavia II. reigned in his stead. Hostilities at once ceased, and Hasan, the Syrian general, knowing Muavia II. to be a weakling, offered to make Abdalla caliph if he would accompany him to Damascus. But he foolishly refused, so Hasan went home alone, and Abdalla remained rival caliph, his rule acknowledged over a portion of the Moslem empire.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OMMEYADS.

683. MUAVIA II. succeeded his father Yezid II., but only reigned for a few months. When he died, Abdalla, son of Zobeir, was for the moment sole caliph, and was obeyed in Arabia, Egypt and Irak. Had he gone to Syria when Yezid died, as Hasan suggested, he might have established the sole caliphate in his own family. But as he was not there the Damascenes remained
684. faithful to the Ommeyads, and elected Merwan I., a cousin of Muavia I., as their caliph, in succession to Muavia II. Merwan I. reigned but one year. To him succeeded Abd al Melik, son of Muavia II., who reigned for twenty years.

Thus there were two caliphs reigning simultaneously, Abd al Melik ruling from Damascus, and Abdalla ruling from Mecca. Throughout the Moslem world there was strife, some supporting one caliph, some the other, some making vengeance for Othman their watchword, others clamouring for vengeance for Hosein.

Abd al Melik determined to end the division of the caliphate, and began by attacking Irak, where Musab, brother of Abdalla, was governor. Musab was slain, and Abd al Melik entered Kufa in triumph. He next sent a force against Mecca,
691. where Abdalla himself dwelt. The force was commanded by Hejaj, a particularly unscrupulous general, who besieged Mecca for several months. Abdalla made a stout resistance, but his men gradually deserted him, and he was left almost alone. He fell fighting bravely.

Abd al Melik was now sole caliph of Islam. He rewarded Hejaj by making him governor in Arabia, and he ruled it with a rod of iron. Afterwards Hejaj was made governor of Khor-

asan, where he exterminated the Karejites who had been again giving trouble. Their last commander, Shebib, was drowned. 696.

Since the heavy defeat of Muavia I. before Constantinople the Saracens had been paying tribute to Byzantium. The tribute was paid in Byzantine coin, for the "Byzant" had been current for centuries throughout the civilised world. But a mint had now been established at Damascus, and Abd al Melik tendered the tribute in Arabian coin. Justinian II., now ruling in Byzantium, foolishly demurred, whereupon Abd al Melik declined to pay any more tribute at all, and Justinian was unable to force him.

Abd al Melik was strong enough to bring Africa back to its allegiance. Hasan, his general, reached Carthage and reduced it. The Berbers held out for a time under Queen Kahina, but 698.
she was captured and executed. Many thousands of Berber warriors were incorporated with the Saracenic army, and this strengthened the caliphate for a time.

Abd al Melik was an enlightened ruler as well as an able warrior. He encouraged literary men, and poets of eminence flourished during his reign. He was succeeded by his son Walid I.

Walid I. was a man of luxurious habits and artistic tastes. 705.
He was an industrious builder. He built a mosque at Cairo, enlarged one at Jerusalem built by his father, and rebuilt the sacred structures of Mecca. He also built a mosque at Damascus which united happily the architecture of Greece and Persia, and helped to lay the foundation of the Saracenic style.

Walid's generals were very successful. Their armies ravaged Cappodocia, Armenia, Pontus and Galatia, crossed the Oxus, captured Bokhara and Samarcand, overran Scinde, and penetrated to the Indus. His fleets ravaged Sicily and Sardinia, and made the name of Saracen a terror in the Mediterranean.

Early in his caliphate Walid sent Musa, a leading general, into Africa to subdue the land. He reached the pillars of Her-

cules on the African side of which lay the city and fort of Ceuta, of which one, count Julian, was commandant. Against count Julian Musa fought successfully. Spain was at this
708. time under the Visigoths, whose king, Witica, had been deposed by duke Roderick, between whom and count Julian there was deadly feud. Julian proposed to Musa that he should cross to Spain and conquer Roderick, thinking doubtless that Musa would be content to plunder and return. Musa obtained the consent of the caliph for the enterprise, and having first sent an experimental expedition followed it by a more important one under Tarik, his lieutenant. The rock on which Tarik landed, known to the ancients as Calpe, became afterwards called Gibel-Tarik, the rock of Tarik, out of which the name Gibraltar is said to have evolved.

711. A decisive battle was fought between the Moslems and the Visigoths at Xeres, near Cadiz. The Goths were defeated, and Roderick was slain. Musa, jealous of his lieutenant's success, hurried across the Straits with further forces, and bade him not advance until he arrived. But Tarik declined to wait, and advanced into Spain in three divisions, capturing Malaga, Toledo and Cordova. He then marched northward right through Spain as far as the Bay of Biscay.

When Tarik at last returned to Toledo to meet Musa, he was thrown into prison for disobedience. Afterwards he was released by order of the caliph and restored to his command, after which Musa and Tarik between them conquered nearly the whole of Spain. The conquerors had, however, fallen out so seriously that they were ordered home. Tarik arrived first, Musa followed leisurely with 30,000 captives and vast booty. He took care to provide for his family, leaving one son governor in Spain, another in Western Africa, a third at Kairwan. When Musa reached Damascus he found Walid dying, and Soliman, his brother, on the point of succeeding to
715. the caliphate. Soliman had no favour for Musa. He received him coldly, stripped him of his wealth and deposed his family. Tarik does not seem to have fared much better at Soliman's hands.

The conquerors of Spain may have been indiscreet, but they did not deserve the treatment they received. The conquest had been an extraordinary feat. In two years the country had been subdued, for though a few places, such as Cordova and Saragossa, were not conquered all at once, the Goths did not choose a new king, or rally for any general effort of resistance. Only the Basques and the inhabitants of the Asturias maintained a precarious independence in their mountainous homes.

The government of Spain was conducted with moderation by the Moslems. The conversion of the people to Islam was out of the question, so the churches were not interfered with: the Spaniards enjoyed their own religion and were governed according to their own customs. It was only required that they should remain faithful to the government and pay tribute.

Soliman's want of interest in the conquest of Spain arose 716.
from the fact that he had determined upon a more important conquest, that of Constantinople. The moment seemed propitious. The Byzantine Empire was notoriously weak. Six emperors had been dethroned in twenty-one years. On the north the Bulgarians had wasted Europe to the very walls of Constantinople. On the south the Saracens had wasted Asia even to the Bosphorus. The best Byzantine general was Leo, the Isaurian, who had command of the Asiatic army, and he was openly mutinous, and corresponding with the enemy. Arrangements had been in progress for attacking the city for a good while. Walid, before he died, had prepared a great naval and military armament, numbering, it is said, 180,000 men.

Unfortunately for the Saracens, Theodosius III., recognising his inability to cope with the situation, abdicated, and Leo the Isaurian was raised to the Byzantine throne. This, of course, ended his disloyalty; he turned now to the defence of the capital with immense energy and determination. At the first encounter Leo destroyed twenty Moslem ships of war. The fleet could not force the passage of the Bosphorus, so that Leo continued to have command of and to draw his supplies from

the Black Sea. Thus the blockade of the city was imperfect, and the besiegers suffered far more than the besieged. During the winter especially they were badly housed and badly fed, whilst the troops in Byzantium had every comfort.

Soliman, hoping that his presence would turn the tide, was
717. setting out for the front when he died. His successor, Omar II., had no better fortune. The ships were burnt, the soldiers were starved. To make matters worse the Bulgarians came south, and 20,000 men sent to check their advance were cut to pieces. Retreat was imperative, and as usual was disastrous. As regards the fleet, out of 1,000 vessels only five returned.

It is scarcely possible to overestimate the value of the service rendered by Leo the Isaurian in checking the Saracens at this time. Had he failed, it is not easy to see where else the conquering hordes could have been checked until they reached Western Europe.

720. When Omar II. died, Yezid II. reigned in his stead. After
724. four years he also died, and Hisham became caliph. Hisham's reign was long and eventful. Some years before his accession the Moslems had made inroads into Southern France. Their first raid was successful, they ravaged the land as far as Nismes, and returned laden with booty. Three years later they again crossed the Pyrenees, stormed Narbonne, and garri-
721. soned its fortress as their permanent headquarters. They advanced upon Toulouse, but their leader was killed, they were thrown into confusion and had to retire to Spain. A Moslem garrison, however, remained in Narbonne, and thus they kept a foothold north of the Pyrenees.

725. A few years afterwards the Saracens stirred again. Anbasa, a famous general, set out from Narbonne with a large army and raided Southern France. With much booty he then returned to Spain. Anbasa died, and for some years France had peace.

731. Eudo, duke of Aquitaine, liegeman to the Frankish king, rebelled, and declared himself independent. Charles Martel, the famous mayor of the palace, crossed the Loire, beat him in the field, ravaged his province, and drove him into Bordeaux.

Notwithstanding defeat, Eudo was persevering in his re- 732.
sistance, when another foe attacked him. Abd er Rahman, the Saracen governor of Spain, crossed the Western Pyrenees at the head of a huge army, and Eudo, though he put forth all his strength, was hopelessly routed. Bordeaux was sacked, the country ravaged on all sides. Eudo's only hope lay in getting the help of the Franks. Accordingly he sped to Charles Martel, made submission, and besought his aid.

Charles Martel recognised the gravity of the situation, and drew together the whole available force of the Frankish realms. The task was not a light one. The Saracens were flushed with victory, and the Franks had little experience of their tactics. At Poitiers the hosts met, and each waited for the other to take the initiative. At last Abd er Rahman attacked. The onset of the Saracens was terrific, but they had for the first time to deal with heavily armed European troops. The French stood the shock, and the scimitar was broken by the long sword and the battle-axe. After several furious onslaughts the Moslems recoiled, leaving thousands dead on the field. Then Eudo with his Aquitanians assailed their rear. They wavered, and Charles Martel, seizing the auspicious moment, charged along the whole line. Darkness ended the slaughter, and when daylight appeared, the Saracens were far away flying southward.

Thus within a brief space the Saracens had been twice heavily defeated at the gates of Europe, at Constantinople by 717.
Leo the Isaurian, in France by Charles Martel. These heroes 732.
rendered noble service to Christendom. We do not believe that the Saracens could have made any permanent conquest in France, or that Mohammedanism could ever have endangered the faith of Western Europe. But it was well that the struggle should be short and decisive. And so it was. The Moslems accepted their defeat in France as final, and though years passed before their garrisons were entirely expelled, there were no more Saracen invasions of Gaul.

The victory of Leo the Isaurian in the east of Europe was

not less important, and was perhaps more praiseworthy, seeing that it was only gained by long tenacious fighting over a period of years. Unfortunately, though it threw back the Moslem conquest of Eastern Europe for centuries, it was not destined to be final.

The heavy blows which Islam had received under the Ommeyads did not add to the popularity of the dynasty. It will be remembered that, with the death of Ali, the caliphate passed into the hands of Muavia I., son of Abu Sufyan, at one time Mohammed's most bitter enemy. Muavia was the first caliph of the Ommeyad dynasty, which had now lasted nearly a century.

Though Mohammed's lineal descendants perished in the massacre of Kerbela, there existed a collateral branch, the Abbassides, descendants of Abbas, one of Mohammed's uncles. Abu Abbas had been kind to Mohammed, and his descendants were regarded by the Moslems with favour.

Abdalla, chief of the Abbasside family in former years, had been greatly attached to Ali and Hosein, and when they were slain he retired to an obscure town on the confines of Arabia. Here his son Mohammed conceived the idea of supplanting the Ommeyad dynasty by the Abbasside. He knew that he could best accomplish this by winning the Alyites to his side, so he declared that a descendant of Ali had on his death-bed transferred to him his rights of succession. The Abbassides and Alyites sent emissaries abroad spreading discontent, and, as the power of the Ommeyads waned, there were many revolts. Of these the worst were in Khorasan, where Abu Muslim, a warm partisan, led the movement.

743. When Hisham died, after a reign of twenty years, the Moslem power had ceased to advance, and the Ommeyad dynasty was losing its prestige in Islam. Hisham was followed by Walid II., who reigned for fifteen months; he by Yezid III. who reigned five months; and he by Ibrahim who reigned but three. Merwan II. then became caliph. He was
744. a strong man, and might have revived the prospects of the

dynasty had matters been less serious. But the caliphate had lost its hold on Spain and Africa, and Khorasan was full of rebellion. The Abbasside movement had greatly advanced, and the time of open and widespread revolt was at hand.

Hardly had Merwan II. become caliph when the crisis came. The first revolt was at Hems (Emesa); then there was one near Damascus; soon they were all around. For some years Merwan held his own. Then Khorasan rose. Here the family of Ali was specially strong, and at Merv a new dynasty was proclaimed. Abu Abbas, chief of the Abbassides, took 749.
possession of the governor's palace in Merv, assumed the title of caliph, and called the faithful to his banner. They rallied round and soon he marched at the head of 45,000 men. Merwan made strenuous efforts, and met his foe near Arbela, not 750.
far from that place where, a thousand years before, Darius and Alexander had tried conclusions. Merwan fought bravely, but his followers were without enthusiasm, and he had to fly. He reached Damascus to find its gates closed against him. Southward he fled, through Palestine, into Egypt. At last in a small Coptic chapel at Busir on the frontier of the Delta, he was overtaken and slain. With him the Ommeyad dynasty came to an end.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ABBASSIDES.

750. We have seen how Merwan, the last caliph of the Ommeyad house was defeated and slain, and how Abu Abbas succeeded him. The Abbasside dynasty, thus founded, lasted for several centuries, and brought much glory to Islam. Its rule, however, was never co-extensive with the Moslem empire.

Abbas began his career by trying to exterminate the Ommeyads. The members of the family were proscribed and slain wherever found. A few escaped, among whom was Abd er Rahman, a youth who fled to North Africa and took refuge with the Berbers. Both North Africa and Spain favoured the Ommeyads, so Abd er Rahman eventually crossed to Spain, and was received with honour. Soon he became prince of the country, founding the caliphate of Cordova, though the title of caliph was not assumed by him, but by his successors at a much later date. The caliphate of Cordova was small, comprising parts of Spain and Northern Africa, but though small it occupied for three centuries a distinguished position in Saracenic history.

During the reign of Abd er Rahman Charlemagne invaded Spain, and met with the disaster at Roncesveaux which is
778. described in another section of our history.

Though the caliphs of Cordova ruled brilliantly, and triumphed for a time over the small Christian States into which Spain had been divided, they could not permanently hold their own in that country. When the last caliph was deposed
1035. Spain broke up into independent principalities. The struggle between these went on, the Christian States gradually gaining ground. Before the end of the thirteenth century all Spain,

except Granada, was again in the hands of the Christians. Granada remained Mohammedan until the days of Ferdinand 1492.
and Isabella, who completed the unification of Spain.

Abu Abbas, the founder of the Abbasside dynasty, reigned four years and gave governorships to various members of his family, hoping that this would lead to unity. It led to strife instead, for when Abu Abbas died and was succeeded by 754.
Mansur, his brother, the governor of Irak, Abdalla, his uncle, the governor of Syria, rebelled. Abdalla was crushed by Abu Muslim, who had done more than any other man to establish the Abbasside dynasty. But Muslim got a poor reward for his services. His success alarmed Mansur, and he was assassinated.

Mansur decided to establish a new capital, and founded the 762.
city of Bagdad. The Ommeyad capital had been at Damascus, and the removal of the seat of government to a city so far east as Bagdad may have been a mistake. The unity of the Moslem empire was endangered. The religious supremacy of the caliph of Bagdad was everywhere respected, but his political authority was of little consequence in the Western provinces.

Bagdad is situated on the Tigris, fifteen miles above the ruins of Ctesiphon. The fascinating tales of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* have familiarised us with the city, and its very name conjures up visions of splendour. Truly a great change had come over the spirit of Islam. Could contrast be greater than that between Omar crossing the desert on his camel dressed like a beggar man, his meagre fare dangling in his saddle-bags, and the caliph of Bagdad, dwelling in an everlasting glitter of gold and silver and precious stones?

To Mansur succeeded Mehdi, his son. During his reign 775.
occurred the strange rebellion which has been immortalised to us by Moore in his poem of Lalla Rookh. Mokanna, the veiled prophet of Khorasan, headed a revolution and had many adherents. He professed to be an incarnation of the Deity, and his face was said so to shine that mortals could not bear the sight. Probably he had instead a face which disease had disfigured. Mokanna defeated the governor of Khorasan, but the

caliph at length sent against him an army so huge that his followers deserted his standard. When the end approached Mokanna destroyed his family, and then flinging himself into the flames of his burning palace was entirely consumed.

785. Mehdi was succeeded by Hadi. At this time the empress Irene reigned at Constantinople in the name of her son Constantine IV. She went to war with the Saracens, but was disastrously defeated, and only gained peace by payment of a huge annual tribute.

Haroun al Raschid next reigned, the fifth caliph of the
786. dynasty. His reign is generally regarded as the summit of the Saracenic golden age. The empire was prosperous, the barbarism of the desert had made way for a civilisation, itself barbaric, but having a splendour all its own. Saracenic art and architecture were developing, learning was patronised, and Bagdad was a rendezvous for poets and philosophers.

Haroun al Raschid was contemporaneous with Charlemagne, and the rulers exchanged courtesies. Haroun sent a clock to Charlemagne, "of gilt bronze, wherein a clepsydra marked out the twelve hours. As each hour ended, a little golden ball was released, and, falling on a bell, struck it, and made a sound. Moreover, the clock had in it twelve horsemen, which issued forth from twelve windows at the end of the hours, and by the shock of their issuing forth closed up twelve other windows which before were open. Many other marvels there were in the clock too long to tell" (Dean Kitchin, *France*, p. 133).

Many wonderful clocks have been made since, but it is worth remembering that three centuries before the Norman conquest the Saracen clockmakers were not less clever than English clockmakers of comparatively recent times.

Readers of the *Arabian Nights* will remember the Barmecides. The Barmek family came from Khorasan about the time that the Abbasside dynasty was founded. One of them became grand vizier to Abbas, and continued vizier in the reign of Mansur, his brother. Other caliphs also utilised the family, finding them trustworthy and possessed of special

ministerial ability. During the reign of Haroun they rose to great power. The caliph lived in luxurious ease, and the Barmecides did the work, administering the affairs of state, encouraging commerce and conquering enemies. They were strong men, and so far as we can judge, honourable men. But Haroun became jealous of his great ministers, and suddenly turning against them, destroyed the whole family and confiscated their property throughout the empire.

After the destruction of the Barmecides, Haroun did not find life in Bagdad agreeable, for they had many friends. Accordingly he spent much of his time at Rakka, a city on the Euphrates in the north of Syria.

Before the death of Haroun the separate dynasty of the 809.
Aglabites had been founded at Kairwan and Tunis, so that there were now caliphates at Bagdad, Cordova and Tunis. The Aglabite government lasted for 140 years.

Haroun was no mean warrior, and during his reign the Moslems had many successes against the Greeks. Nicephorus usurped the place of Irene, and refused to pay the tribute which she had promised. But Haroun invaded Asia Minor, and so ravaged the land that Nicephorus was glad to purchase peace at any price.

Haroun left two sons, Amin and Mamun. They shared the empire between them, Amin taking the west, Mamun taking Khorasan. But the arrangement only lasted four years. Mamun was the abler man, and one after another the provinces fell from Amin to him. At last Amin was slain, and Mamun reigned alone. The early years of his reign were stormy. He continued to live at Merv, and allowed a minister to rule at Bagdad. There were many revolts, and Mamun had to take the reins into his own hands. After this things went well.

Mamun reigned alone for twenty years. About this time the civilisation of the Mohammedans was in advance of anything else in Europe. The empire was well governed in many ways. There was a postal service, and taxation was evenly distributed.

Canals, aqueducts and roads were constructed. Cities of considerable size sprang up; and Saracenic architecture with its domes, minarets and horse-shoe arches developed. There were famous universities at Bagdad, Cairo and Cordova. Philosophy, law, medicine, theology and mathematics were taught with skill. An Arab mathematician invented the decimal system in the twelfth century. A treatise on algebra was written in the century with which we are dealing. Spherical trigonometry was developed later. The terms sine, cosine, tangent are Arabian. The Arabs invented the pendulum and made progress in astronomy. Observatories were built, and on the sandy plain between Palmyra and Rakka a degree of the meridian was measured. The Arabs had a real science of medicine and no small knowledge of chemistry. They worked beautifully in metals, and made pottery and glass. But their art and civilisation were doomed to perish, trodden in the mire by Turkish invasion and Turkish control.

About this time the kingdom of Fez was founded, and the islands of Crete and Sicily were conquered by Moslems. Sicily
827. was invaded, and the Saracenic capital of the island was fixed at Palermo, which gave excellent anchorage to the Moslem fleet. Syracuse made a prolonged resistance, not submitting until 878, but after its fall conquest was rapid and Christianity almost disappeared from the island.

The conquest of Sicily led to a revival of piracy on the Mediterranean. From the shores of Sicily and Africa vessels sailed forth, making peaceful commerce well-nigh impossible. Sometimes the pirates sailed in squadrons and pillaged the
846. coast towns. The Tiber itself was entered and churches were robbed even in the suburbs of Rome. But Pope Leo IV. arranged an alliance between various maritime communities, and when the Moslems again sailed into the port of Ostia a combined fleet gave them battle. They were completely defeated and many became slaves.

Mamun was a great ruler, and eager to advance learning. So eager was he that he is said to have gone to war with the

Byzantine emperor because he forbade a philosopher whom Mamun wished to engage to leave his dominions. He was quite heterodox and persecuted Moslems who followed the Koran too closely. He was succeeded by his brother Motasim.

For some time the caliphs had used Turkish mercenaries, especially as household troops. The introduction of foreign soldiery into the capital of an empire has rarely answered, and Bagdad proved no exception to the rule. So long as the Turks only numbered a few thousands it mattered little, but when Motasim garrisoned the capital with them and increased their number to 50,000, matters became serious. There was little discipline amongst the Turks, they were insolent to the people, rioting and bloodshed prevailed. Motasim accordingly tried another arrangement. He established a cantonment at Samara on the Tigris, and there the mercenaries were stationed. The citizens of Bagdad were benefited by the change, but the caliph, living much at Samara, was more than ever under Turkish influence. The Mamelukes, as the mercenaries were called, displaced the Arab soldiery, and soon had the caliphate at their mercy, making and unmaking caliphs at will.

During Motasim's caliphate, Theophilus, the Byzantine em- 836.
peror, foolishly renewed a war which had been temporarily ended by the death of Mamun, making incursions into Syria, and devastating the country as far as Mesopotamia. Motasim took a terrible revenge. At the head of 200,000 men he invaded Asia Minor, drove the Greeks before him, and besieged Amorium, one of the most prosperous cities in the Byzantine empire. He captured it, put its inhabitants to the sword, and razed it to the ground.

Wathek succeeded Motasim, and, on his death, the Turks 842.
placed Motawakkel on the throne. Though himself a profli- 847.
gate and a drunkard, Motawakkel was extremely orthodox, and persecuted Jews and Christians without mercy, placing them under ignominious restrictions. He was assassinated, and the Turks then placed Montaser on the throne. He reigned 861.
but five months, and was succeeded by Mostain. 862.

The Moslem world was now torn by faction, both political and religious. The unity of belief upon which Mohammed had insisted was a thing of the past. Islam had as many sects as Christianity, the caliphs were often freethinkers, the authority of the Koran was openly called in question. In the cities there was much civil strife. In Samara the populace and the soldiery were continually at war. In Bagdad the Turks assassinated each other, and caliphs were put up and pulled down as the troops saw fit.

870. During the reign of Motamed, Khorasan and Egypt separated themselves from the empire, and new dynasties became established.

Among the sects that arose in the Moslem world were the Ismailians. The Ismailians were Alyites, and believed in the coming of a Messiah, or Mahdi, who would restore justice on the earth, and take vengeance on the oppressors of the family of Ali. They had a more exalted conception of God than is to be found in the Koran.

Out of the Ismailians sprang the Fatimites. Obeidalla, pontiff of the Ismailians, professed descent from Ali. He revived the claims of the Alyites, and founded a new Fatimite dynasty. His capital was at Mahadi, on the African coast, not far from Kairwan. He subdued the Aglabites, who had been predominant there, and ruled Africa from Egypt to the Atlantic. Egypt itself he was unable to conquer, but one of his successors accomplished this, and a Fatimite dynasty ruled that country until it was overthrown by Saladin. There are still several millions of Alyites or Shias, about 5 per cent. of the total number of Moslems, and the Mahdi, the Messiah, who will break in pieces the rod of the oppressor, is still longed for in the deserts of the Soudan.

The Karmathians were a branch of the Ismailians. At first they seem to have protested against the worldliness which had taken possession of the caliphate. They held their own for a long time in Irak, Syria, and Eastern Arabia. They even captured such cities as Kufa and Bassora. But at last they

WIDEST LIMITS OF MOSLEM RULE
BEFORE BYZANTIUM FELL
MOSLEM TERRITORY

were defeated and driven into Arabia. There they stormed Mecca, plundered the city, and carried away the black stone from the Kaaba. It was afterwards restored, but in a shattered condition. The Karmathians took to plundering caravans, and in the tenth century were exterminated.

Notwithstanding their internal dissensions the Saracens continued to give a good account of the foreign foe. Their conflicts with the Byzantines were continuous, and the balance of advantage was generally on their side. Not always, however. Crete was recovered from them by Romanus, after having 961.
been under their dominion for a century and a half. Attempts to drive them from Sicily were unsuccessful.

The later caliphs were mostly weak men, the tools of their soldiers and ministers. Bagdad became the scene of frightful anarchy, and its magnificence faded. A new dynasty, the Buvide, the sovereigns of whom claimed descent from Ali, be- 945.
came supreme, and for nearly a century and a half the city was under its control. The caliph renounced temporal power and became simply the spiritual head of Islam. The head of the State was known as the Prince of Princes, and the caliph was a puppet in his hands. The rule of the Buvides ended when 1050.
the Seljuk Turkish dynasty was established at Bagdad.

After the point of time which we have now reached in Moslem history, it will not be necessary to continue to deal with it as a separate entity. For the next two centuries the most interesting facts in connection with it may be found by reading the chapters which deal with the Crusades. After the Crusades and until the fall of Constantinople Moslem history can be sufficiently followed in the sections which deal with the Byzantine Empire and with Spain. After the fall of Constantinople the history of Mohammedanism will merge to a considerable extent in the history of Turkey.

THE CRUSADES.

THE CRUSADES.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT LED TO THE CRUSADES?

In the eleventh century of the Christian era began the series of strange wars called the Crusades, wars which had for their avowed object the rescue of the Holy Land from the Moslem. Though the crusades began in the eleventh century they extended to the thirteenth, so that they were not an outburst of mere fanatical zeal or momentary enthusiasm. They were the outcome of a variety of circumstances, partly political, partly religious. Of these two were specially instrumental in bringing matters to a crisis, the aggression of the papacy and the aggression of the Turk.

Four hundred and fifty years had passed since Mohammed drew the sword. The caliphs, his successors, were not content to confine Islam to Arabia. Perceiving that their followers must have scope for their raiding propensities, they turned them loose upon the world, and offered Islam, tribute, or the sword to all nations. Since the days of Attila, the world had not seen anything so terrible as this Moslem frenzy. Conquest was rapid, for the Byzantine and Persian empires were exhausted. During Mohammed's life all Arabia accepted the faith. Within the eight years following, Persia, Palestine, Egypt, and much of Asia Minor, had succumbed. The Saracens, as the Moslem warriors were called by the Westerns, received their first serious check from Leo the Isaurian at 718.
Constantinople. Of 180,000 men who gathered to the siege of that city, only 30,000 survived. Somewhat later the Saracens

received an almost equally severe check in France. Having by
711. degrees conquered Africa, they crossed to Spain and also conquered it. From Spain they invaded France and ravaged Aquitaine, but were overthrown by Charles Martel, near
732. Poitiers. The victory of Charles Martel checked the Moslem advance in Western Europe for all time, the victory of Leo postponed their advance in Eastern Europe for several centuries.

637. Jerusalem had capitulated to the caliph Omar in the seventh century, and long lay under Moslem rule. When once they had conquered the Saracens were tolerant. The Mosque of Omar was built on the site of the Temple, but the Holy Sepulchre was preserved to the Christians, and they had, for a long time, no special cause of complaint. The Saracens were intellectually in advance of the Westerns. They were patrons of education, and as time went on they had schools and colleges of merit. In the West Roman civilisation had been wiped out by the Northern races, and for many centuries unblushing ignorance prevailed. In the ninth century the supreme judge of the German Empire could not write his name. For many centuries such education as existed in the West was confined to the priests. The noble signed his name by making his mark, and was proud that he could do no more. The words which Sir Walter Scott puts in the mouth of Douglas, "Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine, save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line," well represent the state of mind of Europe's Western nobility in mediæval times. The Byzantines, the Arabians, the Persians, and the East Indians were much more cultured. Among the Westerns science was counted little better than blasphemy, and a clever inventor ran the risk of being condemned as a wizard.

Feudalism crushed the life out of the people. The barons lived in strongholds, and robbed and plundered at will. The poor man dared not lead an independent life. He must have a master, and in exchange for protection must surrender himself to that master, body and soul. Patriotism was impossible,

nor could there be any true sense of obligation from class to class. The nobles gloried in private combat and private war, caring not that the people lived in misery and passed away in bloodshed. The institution of chivalry did a little to redeem the character of the times, but only a little. Its motives were not high. The knight thought chiefly of his own glory; the women for whom he fought were of his own rank, for the poor no man cared.

The conditions we have described were not favourable to the acquisition of wealth. Such prosperity as existed under Roman rule had been swept away. The industrial arts, long neglected, had, in many parts of Europe, almost ceased to exist. They could at the best only be practised in a few walled cities, whose burghers managed to maintain their independence, either by purchase or by force. In open places baronial strife made high cultivation, or the acquisition of even moderate wealth, impossible. Why trouble about sowing, when one knew not who would reap? Why breed cattle for the raider to drive away? So men lived from hand to mouth in sordid poverty.

In the Christian Church men found little help. Doubtless there were faithful shepherds here and there. But in the main ecclesiastical offices were bestowed with little regard to spiritual fitness. Something the Church had done in the interests of peace. "The truce of God," which bound men to abstain from fighting during certain periods, saved Europe from becoming quite a desert. But too often Churchmen utilised the passion for fighting for their own aggrandisement, winning temporal advantage where they could, and mercilessly crushing out with fire and sword every attempt to apply to religion those faculties of reason with which the Creator has endowed mankind.

In the year 1000, many expected the end of the age. Charters are still in existence beginning with the words "appropinquante termino mundi" (as the world is now drawing to a close). When the end did not come at that time it was expected thirty-three years later. The fear of approaching

disaster added enormously to the possessions of the Church, and drove many unsuitable men into holy orders. The condition of the Church at this time was lamentable. At a council held at Reims it was declared that the Church "was ruled by monsters of iniquity, wanting in all culture, whether sacred or profane". In the middle of the eleventh century one writes: "Everything is degenerate, all is lost, faith has disappeared".

There were at this time no strong national governments in Western Europe. England had just been conquered by Normans, and between ruler and ruled there was as yet no sympathy. Germany and France were divided into petty states, each governed by its own feudal lord, sometimes stronger than his king. The feudal lord could coin money; indulge in private war; was largely free from taxation, and had power of life and death over his subjects. His tenants marched to war at his command. It was this that made the Crusades possible.

During the tenth and the early part of the eleventh centuries the papal chair was often filled by unworthy and even disgraceful men. After the middle of the eleventh century better men were chosen, and an effort was made to reform the Church and the world. In this effort Hildebrand's influence was at first paramount. His methods were indefensible, and his plan failed, but he doubtless meant well. Perceiving the impotence of the secular power, he conceived the idea of making the Pope supreme earthly potentate. To him even kings were to bow. Religious officers were to be chosen by him, and to him must yield implicit obedience. That they might be pliant instruments they were to be as far as possible free from earthly ties. This necessitated celibacy, and priests already married were to forsake their wives and children. The badness of the times was the only excuse for Hildebrand's audacious scheme, the offspring of an ambitious rather than a far-seeing mind. Had Hildebrand been able to guarantee a succession of great and good men in the papal chair it might

have been different, but history had sufficiently proved that between kings and popes there was little to choose. In the end Europe found a better way. The nation became the unit, with the king at its centre, and the development of the spirit of patriotism bound class to class. Nevertheless, Hildebrand's scheme fascinated his successors and died hard. It had a direct bearing upon the Crusades.

The rapid success of the Saracens alarmed the West. When they captured Jerusalem, seized Northern Africa, overran Spain, besieged Constantinople, invaded France, and even attacked Rome, there was cause for fear. But as time went on it became evident that the Arab wave was spent. There was schism amongst the Moslems, and for a time they ceased to be dangerous. But the general confidence was destined to be rudely shaken.

Early in the eleventh century Asia began to pour out new hordes of invaders. These were the Seljukian Turks, greedy for spoil. They had accepted Islam, but would fight Moslems as well as Christians if they barred their way. All through the eleventh century the Seljuks pressed forward, making steady progress in Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor. Their 1071.
leader Alp Arslan defeated and captured Romanus IV., the Byzantine emperor, at the battle of Manzikert. His son, Malik-shah, pressed forward until the Greek Empire had practically disappeared from Asia Minor, and the Turkish banners flaunted almost within sight of Constantinople itself. 1074.

In their despair the Greeks appealed to Hildebrand (Gregory VII.) praying for help from Western Europe. Right gladly would Hildebrand have acquiesced. He saw that a movement which would combine the Catholics of Europe under papal command would add enormously to his prestige. Accordingly he summoned the Christian potentates to the rescue and himself proposed to lead their hosts. But the time had not yet come. The Christian potentates were too jealous of Hildebrand to give him more power. Moreover, when he demanded from the Greeks as a condition of his aid that they should

acknowledge his supremacy over the Greek Church, even they drew back. They would not have his help at such a price. Thus the first effort to arouse the crusading spirit failed, and afterwards Hildebrand found so many troubles of his own that he had little time to give to those of Byzantium.

In the eleventh century the habit of making pilgrimage to the Holy Land was well established. Early Christianity had deprecated the idea that one place was more sacred than another. But when the State took Christianity under its wing and made it the religion of the rich and powerful, many things changed. The simplicity of early worship passed away. Stately churches and ornate ceremonial took its place. Churches were built in memory of martyrs and were adorned with paintings and images. In the end of the fourth century the worship of images in the churches had become common. The attachment of sanctity to particular places easily followed. In the fourth century, through the piety of Constantine and Helena his mother, churches were built on the traditional sites of our Lord's birth and burial. Efforts were made to identify spots specially memorable. Pilgrimages were the natural result. In Constantine's reign a pilgrim went by land from Bordeaux to Jerusalem, and left a record of his journey which is still extant.

Soon pilgrimage became fashionable. Many things conspired to this end. The love of adventure was doubtless a prime motive with some. In days when there were few books, and few who could read them, men desiring information must see the world. Others were doubtless influenced by a single-minded desire to see the places sanctified by the bodily presence of their Lord. Some of the early Fathers saw danger in this desire. Augustine bade Christians remember that Christ was not to be sought in special places but was everywhere present by faith. Jerome speaks of the uselessness of pilgrimage, yet himself dwelt for many years in Bethlehem. Paula, the noble Roman lady who accompanied him and spent a fortune in his service, said: "Here are Gauls and Britons, Persians and Ar-

menians, Indians and Æthiopians all dwelling in love and harmony". By the end of the fourth century the practice of pilgrimage had so increased that alms were collected in the churches for the relief of poor pilgrims at Jerusalem.

As the centuries passed superstition became rife, and men believed that miraculous power was associated with relics, images and sacred places. Pilgrimages were undertaken to the tombs of the saints in the hope of receiving physical or spiritual benefit. Enormous profits accrued to the churches from these beliefs, and they were encouraged by the priesthood.

Finally, pilgrimage became associated with the idea of penance and indulgence. In early times, amongst rough folk, the infliction of penance for certain offences was perhaps the best way of enforcing discipline. Though prolific of abuse it doubtless had at times a wholesome effect upon rude natures. Sometimes the penance took the form of fasting or scourging; sometimes money payment was enjoined; sometimes a pilgrimage to the tomb of a saint; sometimes a journey to Rome or Jerusalem. Fulk of Anjou, a specially bad man, went thrice to Jerusalem for his sins. The father of William the Conqueror went to Jerusalem on his bare feet. He got there safely, but on his way home died at Nicæa.

In the latter part of the eleventh century pilgrimages increased. The conversion of Hungary to Christianity made the overland journey more easy. Some came by sea from the coast ports of Italy. Amalfi, on the Bay of Naples, did a great trade in pilgrims, and its fleets were under the special protection of the caliphs. Amongst the pilgrims the French were most numerous, and the name of Frank was given by the Saracens to all Western Europeans. Men of every class went on pilgrimage, rich as well as poor. Resting-places, hospitals and guest houses were built here and there by benefactors, and the pilgrim's dress ensured a welcome. Of course pilgrimage was attended with peril at the best of times. In 1064 the Bishop of Mainz led 7,000 pilgrims to the Holy Land, and only 2,000

returned. The mortality amongst pilgrims was caused as much by hardship and ignorance of travel as by the attacks of robbers. Many of the pilgrims were physically unfit for the journey. They were ignorant of the dangers attending Eastern travel, and fell easy victims to sunstroke, typhoid and dysentery. But if a man returned safely, he was a hero for the rest of his life.

In the last quarter of the eleventh century the Seljukian Turk overran Asia Minor and Palestine. Jerusalem fell, and the Christians soon felt the difference between the rule of the Arab and that of the Turk. To the Arab Jerusalem had a sacredness only second to that of Mecca; to the Turk nothing was sacred. Pilgrims were insulted, robbed, murdered. Pilgrimage, formerly reasonably safe, became well-nigh impossible.

Nor were pilgrims the only sufferers. Pilgrimage had been a source of profit to traders. Some pilgrims were rich and paid large prices for supposed relics and for the wares of the East. Cities on the route grew rich through catering for them. The Easter fair at Jerusalem drew immense crowds. But with the advent of the Seljukian Turk all was changed, for merchants dared no longer bring their wares to Palestine.

1074. This was the state of affairs when the Byzantine emperor sought help from Hildebrand. Neither emperor nor pope was thinking of pilgrims at this time. The emperor dreaded lest Constantinople should fall; the pope, though statesman enough to realise how dangerous the fall of Constantinople might be to Christendom, thought chiefly of augmenting his prestige by leading a great popular movement. But the movement was not popular, the Westerns were not moved by the sorrows of Byzantium.

1086. Victor III., Hildebrand's immediate successor, also advocated a crusade, and promised remission of sins to all who took part in it. His advocacy was successful, but in an unexpected way. The Genoese and Pisans took advantage of the opportunity, and, aided by the volunteers who were inspired by the papal preaching, swept the coast of Africa with

their fleets, and brought back much spoil. It was piracy, pure and simple.

Urban II. now became pope. Pilgrims were returning 1088.
with tales of woe, and their stories spread. They told of peril encountered, of violence, robbery, and oppression endured, above all, of holy places defiled. Men became excited, and talked about putting an end to these things by means of a united effort. Among those who seriously considered the question was pope Urban II. He knew that Hildebrand, his great exemplar, had contemplated a crusade, and he felt safe in following his example. Moreover, it would improve his position as head of the Church, and this was more desirable, seeing that there was an anti-pope, Clement III., a nominee of the German emperor. Doubtless also Urban II. sympathised with the pilgrims, and was grieved that the sacred places of Christianity should be in the hands of the Moslem.

At a Church Council at Piacenza envoys from Alexius I., who was now emperor in Byzantium, were present, and the subject was broached. Little was done then, for Piacenza was in Italy, and the popes have rarely had much influence in Italy. The council was adjourned to Clermont, and there the discussion was resumed. Clermont was in France, and Urban was French, and could harangue the people with effect. After the formal conference he spoke from a platform in the open air to a vast crowd, amongst whom many had been doubtless already wrought up by his emissaries. Urban said little about Alexius or Byzantium, but much about the defilement of Jerusalem. He pleaded for the deliverance of the sacred places from the Moslem, and declared that all who embarked on the enterprise would have their sins forgiven and be sure of a glorious immortality. Urban was an eloquent man. He was speaking as a Frenchman to Frenchmen, and he was at once successful. Men like Father Mathew have swayed multitudes in similar fashion in modern times. At the end of the speech crosses of red cloth, already prepared, were distributed, and thousands sewed them on their garments and

pledged themselves to the enterprise, scarcely knowing what they did.

Urban now sent out missionaries to carry on the work he had begun. The leading missionary was Peter the Hermit, a man who has got undue credit for the crusade. He was a monk of Amiens who had started on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but had turned back, probably because of the tales he heard concerning the violence done to the pilgrims by the Seljuk Turks. Peter was used by Urban II., but there is no proof that he influenced him, or even spoke to him before the Council of Clermont. But Urban knew that more than preaching was necessary to set so novel an enterprise on foot. Those were times when it was not safe for men to travel far from home. Urban therefore proclaimed the inviolability of the crusader. Be he rich or poor, the red cross was to be sufficient guard. The truce of God was extended to three years, and during that time private war was to cease. The Church took upon itself the care of the wives and families of crusaders, and the custody of their estates. The assumption of the cross freed a man from the oppression of his lord, opened the prison doors for the malefactor, and placed the debtor beyond the reach of his creditor. Above all, the assumption of the cross wiped out guilt, however black that guilt might be. When to these considerations we add the love of adventure, the hope of bettering one's fortune, and the joyful thought that passion for fighting could be indulged in under sanction of religion, we need not be surprised at the early popularity of the movement. Doubtless some were impelled by high motives, and went to the Crusades from a sense of binding duty. But this class of crusader was of little use in the Orient, and his bones soon whitened the plain.

When once the rage for crusading began many had an interest in keeping it alive. Kings were not sorry to be rid of the more turbulent of their subjects. The Church benefited enormously. The pope as protector of the possessions and even dominions of crusaders was placed, where Hildebrand had

formerly desired to place him, above all European princes. The preaching of the Crusade was an excuse for sending papal legates into every land, to stir up the people and raise money for the cause. The prelates and monastic houses became guardians or mortgagees of lands belonging to crusaders, and having got hold did not easily let go. If the crusader did not return, well and good; if he did he was often so broken with fever and hardship that he was thankful to spend the rest of his days in a monastery and endow it with his estate. The case was even worse with such as took the cross and afterwards repented. They were subject to excommunication, and were not released until they had paid heavy penalties for non-performance. In after years the popes sometimes used the hold thus obtained over men in high position with cruel effect.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST CRUSADE.

THE effect of Urban's appeal, followed by the preaching of Peter the Hermit and the other emissaries, was great; and when pardon and protection were offered by the Church to all crusaders, multitudes volunteered. The wiser of the volunteers made their preparations with care, and arranged to march under chosen leaders, August, 1096, being provisionally fixed as the date for setting forth.

Whilst the wisest crusaders were thus setting deliberately to work, a horde of men, women and children gathered in the North of France demanding to be led against the Saracen forthwith. This early multitude was drawn from the humbler classes. Some were honest enthusiasts, some of desperate fortune, some jail-birds, but all were alike unsuitable for the enterprise upon which they were so eager to embark.

It must have been with a sinking heart that Peter contemplated this first fruit of his efforts, and bitterly must he have repented the freedom with which he and his companions had given the cross to all comers. But why, even then, either he or Urban should have permitted such a rabble to set out at all is a mystery. They knew to a certain extent at least what a journey to the Holy Land entailed, and must have realised that most of the wretches were but courting death. Perhaps they fancied that after a few days' march the most unsuitable ones would think better of it and return home, and we must hope that this was the case to a larger extent than history records.

The Crusades were prefaced by a bloody persecution of the Jews. The mob, ever eager for an excuse to plunder this un-

happy people, sacked and massacred without mercy in Cologne, Mainz, Verdun, Treves and other cities. At last the emperor, Henry IV., interfered, and his influence protected them for a time.

The first section of mob crusaders was composed of persons 1096.
who came mainly from Northern France and followed Peter the Hermit across the Rhine. Too impatient to wait for the German contingent which was gathering, they set out by themselves. A Burgundian knight, Walter de Poissi, a man of soldierly qualities, undertook the leadership, and did his best to keep his rabble following under control. They started by way of Hungary and Bulgaria, and kept order for a time. Whilst their money lasted and they were able to buy provisions all went well, but when the money was exhausted they began to plunder as if they were in an enemy's country. Bloody retaliation followed, the host was scattered, and great numbers were killed. The rest struggled on to Nisch, where the governor kindly furnished them with guides and food, so that they were able to reach Byzantium in safety. Their numbers were enormously reduced, for many had been slain, and many of the unarmed men and of the women and children had been seized and sold as slaves to pay for the damage which the host had done.

Peter the Hermit followed with the German contingent. He was a less competent leader than Walter de Poissi, and his followers did much as they pleased. At Nisch the governor would have repeated his former kindness, but some scoundrels abused his hospitality and set fire to seven valuable mills on the river. After this he left his people to deal with them as they liked, and they took a terrible revenge. The crusaders were attacked, defeated and scattered with the loss of many lives and such treasure as they were possessed of. Out of the great company which had set forth only 7,000 reached Constantinople. The rest had been slain or sold into slavery.

A third horde marched under Gottschalk, a German priest. They were mostly of the vagabond type and soon gave them-

selves up to debauchery. Such was the infamy of their conduct that Caloman, the king of Hungary, ordered that they should be massacred.

A fourth crowd composed of yet more unmitigated ruffians gathered on the banks of the Rhine and Moselle. They had warriors amongst them, and were led by Volkman, a priest, and count Emico, a blackguard. Their behaviour was atrocious, and at Merseburg, in Hungary, the people rose upon them. Many were slain, many drowned; the survivors struggled back to Germany or through Bulgaria to Constantinople.

The sorry remnants of these mobs now gathered into one company outside Byzantium. The emperor Alexius I. was amazed at this extraordinary result of his appeal; nevertheless he treated the wretches with hospitality, and advised them to await the arrival of the regular crusading armies. But finding that they could not restrain their thieving propensities, but were actually stripping the lead from the church roofs and selling it, he deemed it safer that they should cross to Asia. This accordingly they did, and he supplied them liberally with food until the regular forces should arrive.

Even in Asia they behaved disgracefully. Peter the Hermit, finding that he had no control over them, returned to Constantinople; Walter remained in Asia. Kilij Arslan, the sultan of Roum, now took action. A band of crusaders had seized a deserted fortress and refortified it. He besieged it, and in eight days the fortress fell. The sultan then marched against the town of Civitot, round which the other crusaders were lying in fancied security. He surprised their camp by night, and slew thousands, Walter among the rest. The survivors took refuge in a fort, and held it until imperial troops came to their relief. Of the hosts that had started from Europe a few months before, only 3,000 survived. Three hundred thousand lives had been lost, and nothing achieved.

At length the crusading armies began to move. No
1096. sovereign took part in this crusade, the leaders were princes of the second rank. As it was felt that the numbers of the

crusaders would be too great to permit of marching in one body, the host divided into five sections, each under its chosen leader, who made such arrangements as he best could for safe passage and provision on the route which he followed.

Godfrey of Bouillon was the most prominent of the leaders. He was son of that Eustace of Boulogne who had accompanied William the Conqueror to England, and had with him his two brothers Baldwin and Eustace. His forces were largely German.

Raymond of Toulouse, lord of Southern France, had a great following from Provence. With him was bishop Adhemar of Puy, the papal legate, appointed by the pope spiritual head of the combined hosts.

Hugh of Vermandois, brother of Philip I., king of France, led the forces of Northern France. King Philip, who remained at home, was at present under sentence of excommunication.

Robert of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror, led another host. With him were Robert of Flanders, Stephen of Blois, and many Norman nobles. He had mortgaged his duchy to obtain funds for the venture.

Bohemond of Taranto, who led another host, came, determined to win a principality for himself. He was son of Robert Guiscard, the Norman ruler of Naples who had made war upon Alexius. Alexius regarded him with a suspicious eye, and not without reason. With Bohemond marched Tancred, his cousin, whose virtues have been exaggerated in romance.

Count Hugh of Vermandois, the brother of the king of France, was earliest on the march. He passed through Italy to Bari, and thence crossed the Adriatic to Durazzo. His fleet was scattered in a storm, and when he landed he was conducted to Constantinople as a prisoner. Alexius treated him with courtesy, but held him a hostage for the good behaviour of the rest of the crusaders. We can hardly blame Alexius, for his experience of crusaders had been strange enough thus far, and he knew not what might follow.

Godfrey marched safely to the Hungarian frontier. There he was kept waiting until he had given hostages, after which he traversed Hungary in peace. Arrived at Philippopolis, he heard that Hugh of Vermandois was a prisoner, so he sent envoys demanding his release. When Alexius demurred, Godfrey began to lay waste the country, but when the emperor pledged himself to release the count, Godfrey ceased to plunder, and advanced peaceably to Constantinople.

Bohemond and Tancred crossed the Adriatic to Durazzo, and thence marched overland to Constantinople.

Raymond of Toulouse chose a rough road, skirting the Atlantic, over the Dalmatian mountains, to Durazzo. His men suffered severely on the march, and between Durazzo and Constantinople were often attacked by the tribes. Raymond retaliated with the cruelty of a savage, cutting off the noses and ears of such as he captured.

Robert of Normandy came through Italy. With him were Robert of Flanders, Stephen of Blois, and Odo of Bayeux. He left his followers at Bari and went to Sicily for the winter. Whilst he enjoyed himself there, his men had a bitterly hard time on the coast. Some returned home in disgust. Robert of Flanders braved the winter storms and went on. In the spring Robert crossed to Durazzo with the rest of his army,
1097. and at last reached Constantinople. Odo, his uncle, who accompanied him, died at Palermo.

Alexius was greatly alarmed at this influx of warlike men. He had pleaded for ten thousand men to act under his instructions. Instead, there had come a multitude who scorned his authority, rode roughshod over his people, and repaid kindness with insolence. Some, such as Bohemond, he knew to be sworn enemies, the rest he mistrusted. To protect himself he demanded an oath of fealty from the leaders, and stipulated that, in return for shipment across the Bosphorus, and facilities for their journey through Asia Minor, they should restore to the empire whatever places they might conquer, which had belonged to it in former times. With places which had never

been the property of the empire they might of course do as they liked. The crusaders objected to the arrangement, but they were disunited and mutually jealous, and Alexius got his way. The leaders were then gratified with rich gifts, and amity was restored.

Godfrey of Bouillon crossed to Asia in March, and in May the host assembled on the plains of Nicæa. The numbers can only be guessed. There may have been half a million all told, but a large number were non-effectives, women, children and priests. Many of the crusaders, ignorant of the conditions of life in the East, had come with the view of settling, and had brought their families with them.

Nicæa was the Seljukian capital, and the sultan of Roum had left a sufficient garrison there and taken to the hills with the rest of his forces. He attacked the crusaders furiously, but was repulsed. Siege was then laid to Nicæa, but the city was defended with stubbornness and for some time the issue was in doubt. Nicæa could not be entirely surrounded, as it lay upon a lake across which supplies and reinforcements could be brought, and the crusaders had no ships. They appealed to Alexius, and the Byzantines brought boats to Civitot and dragged them overland to the lake. After this the fall of the city was only a question of time. Alexius pointed this out to the citizens, and advised them to yield to his clemency rather than risk the wrath of the crusaders if they took the city by storm. They agreed to yield, and the crusaders were amazed by suddenly seeing the Byzantine banners upon the battlements. For a time they were enraged, thinking that Alexius had robbed them of their prey; but the emperor had acted wisely, and he compensated them for loss of booty by giving to them lavish gifts.

Proceeding southward the crusaders were attacked at Dorylæum by the sultan. The battle was fiercely contested, and ended in his entire discomfiture. He fled to the East to obtain reinforcements, and meanwhile instructed his remaining forces to hurry southward and devastate the country through which

the crusaders must pass. The crusaders had therefore to march through desolated regions, and their sufferings were intense, many thousands dying by the way.

From Cilicia, Baldwin, brother of Godfrey, diverged eastward to Edessa, hearing that the country there was rich, and inhabited by Christians who would be glad of protection. He was well received by the citizens, and won their hearts by marrying an Armenian princess. He became king of Edessa, and this, the first principality founded by the crusaders, lasted half a century. Though Baldwin may have acted from selfish motives, Edessa was of high strategic importance, providing a barrier against the Turkish advance, and thus protecting the later Latin kingdom of Jerusalem.

Antioch was reached in the autumn and besieged for six
1097. months. At first food and wine were abundant, and there was great waste; then winter brought famine and terrible suffering. To famine pestilence was added, the heavy rains turned the camp into a morass and thousands died. Desertion became frequent. Robert of Normandy went to Laodicea, and only came back under threats. Peter the Hermit tried to escape to Europe, but was chased and brought back by Tancred, and made to swear that he would not again fly.

Whilst the siege of Antioch was in progress, envoys came from the Fatimite caliph of Egypt, offering to co-operate with the crusaders against the Seljukian Turks, who were then in possession of Jerusalem, if they would recognise his supremacy in Palestine. He would guarantee to the Christians full freedom of pilgrimage to the holy places. The alternative, he pointed out, must be war, not only between the crusaders and the Turks, but between the crusaders and the whole Moslem world. The caliph was justified in putting the matter in this way, because until the advent of the Turk, for a period of several centuries, the relations between the Christians and the Moslems in Palestine had been on the whole amicable, and pilgrims had experienced no difficulty in Jerusalem. But to the crusaders, who had very vague ideas of the historical

aspect of the question, one Moslem was the same as another, and they declared that they would rather fight the whole Moslem world than leave a stone of Jerusalem in Moslem hands. These were brave words, but their folly is evidenced from the fact that with the exception of one brief space Jerusalem has been in Moslem hands from that day to this.

When the leaders had almost despaired of capturing Antioch, Bohemond offered to show them how the city might be taken, if they would promise him the sovereignty. They agreed, and he then explained that he was in correspondence with a Moslem captain, who was willing to admit them at his tower. Accordingly a night was fixed for the surrender, and the wall was surmounted by a scaling ladder. Gates were then opened, and the army rushed in. An indiscriminate massacre ensued.

Affairs now took a strange turn. The city was won, but the citadel was still in Moslem hands, and whilst the crusaders were fighting for its possession an immense Turkish army suddenly came upon the scene. It was led by Kerbogha, sultan of Mosul, who had gathered a huge host for the relief of his co-religionists. The besiegers were now themselves besieged, assailed by foes, both within and without. When matters had gone on for a month like this, and the condition of the crusaders seemed desperate, their courage was revived by a trick. Peter Bartholomew, a priest of Marseilles, declared that in a vision St. Andrew had revealed to him the place where lay hidden the very spear which had pierced the side of our Lord; and had assured him that if this weapon were found and carried before the host it would bring victory. After fasting and prayer, twelve men proceeded to dig at the spot indicated. When midnight came, and still no spear had been found, Peter Bartholomew suddenly sprang into the excavation, and with a shout of triumph held up the head of a lance wrapped in cloth. The news spread, the drooping spirits of the soldiers revived, and inspired with fresh zeal they issued from the city and rushed upon the foe. A tremendous

battle was fought, but the crusaders, nerved with the courage of despair, won the day. Sad to relate, some months after this the good faith of Peter Bartholomew was impugned, and he was allowed to subject himself to a fiery ordeal. He emerged alive from the flames, but died of his wounds. That he performed a trick is certain, but it was an innocent trick, which had saved the army, and he deserved a better fate.

Whilst the fall of Antioch was yet in suspense, many even amongst the nobles had deserted and set out for home. On their way across Asia Minor they met Alexius marching with an army to the crusaders' relief. Some of the crusaders, amongst whom was Stephen count of Blois and Chartres, son-in-law of William the Conqueror, gave Alexius such a doleful account of things that he took fright and returned to Constantinople. When the crusaders heard what had happened they were justly furious, and after their victory they sent Hugh of Vermandois as an envoy to Alexius to say that unless he brought forces to their aid, and led their army to Jerusalem himself, they would retract their promises of allegiance. Alexius did not come. He dared not leave Constantinople at so critical a time, and he knew that even if he joined the ranks of the crusaders they would not obey him. Hugh of Vermandois did not trouble to return with Alexius' message of regret, but hied homeward. As for Stephen, he also went home, but was so coolly received by his wife that he preferred to set out again for the Holy Land, and this time he did not return.

Had the crusaders marched at once upon Jerusalem they might have captured the city with little loss. But the march was postponed for ten months. During that time the crusading chiefs wandered over Syria, capturing cities for themselves. Much time was lost and little advantage gained. On the contrary, the enemy were enabled to garrison and revictual Jerusalem, and strengthen its fortifications. Worse still they destroyed the wells and water-tanks in the neighbourhood.

During the delay at Antioch a plague visited the camp, and thousands perished. Amongst these was Adhemar, the

papal legate. The news of the fall of Antioch brought fresh crusaders from Europe, amongst them being Edgar Atheling, the young Saxon prince who had a claim to the English crown.

At last the crusaders left Antioch. So greatly had the 1098.
effective strength of the army been reduced by death and desertion, that only about 50,000 men set out for Jerusalem. The march southward was easy enough. The troops kept to the coast, and were furnished with provisions by a Genoese and Pisan fleet. But time was wasted attacking minor cities on the way, and there was much quarrelling. When the army was before Arkas, ambassadors again came from the caliph of Egypt, proposing a treaty. Jerusalem had now fallen into his hands, the Seljukian Turks having been expelled that very summer, and he was able to guarantee all that he had offered. He was prepared to give full freedom to pilgrims, and would bestow splendid gifts upon the crusading chiefs. His overtures were again rejected.

At last, about midsummer, the crusaders reached Jerusalem. 1099.
The city had been garrisoned by the caliph with 40,000 men, mostly Egyptians. Perceiving that their forces were not sufficiently great to enable them to encompass the city, the crusaders tried an assault. It was repelled with loss, and they then began a regular siege. But the army suffered so terribly from want of water that they had at length to try a second assault. This time they made careful preparation. Battering-rams, siege towers and engines were constructed, and when all was ready and the soldiers had been inspired by a religious procession, the assault began. On the first day it failed. But breaches had been made, and next day the assault was renewed with redoubled fury. At last the city was won. The slaughter that ensued was terrific. Neither age nor sex was spared. The mere description harrows the soul.

"If you desire to know," wrote Godfrey to the pope, "what was done with the enemy, know that in Solomon's porch and temple our men rode in the blood of the Saracen to the knees of their horses."

Another says: "When our men had taken the city there were things wondrous to be seen. For some of the enemy were reft of their heads; others riddled through with arrows were forced to leap down from the towers; others, after long torture, were burned in the flames. In all the streets and squares were piles of heads and hands and feet."

A third eye-witness says: "The dead were heaped up in mountains to be destroyed by fire. Such a slaughter of pagan folk had never been seen or heard of; none knows their number save God alone."

When the crusaders were weary with slaughter they went to the Holy Sepulchre and bewailed their sins. A day or two later, like giants refreshed, they returned to the work and deliberately massacred a great number who had been spared, men, women, and babes at the breast. They evidently looked upon this second massacre as a sacrifice specially well pleasing unto God.

We cannot attempt to fathom the mental and spiritual condition of men who fancied they were serving God whilst doing such devilish work. But the case seems more deplorable when we remember that it was not the Seljukian Turks who were thus treated, but Moslems who had lived on friendly terms with the Christians for centuries, whose caliph had twice offered to the crusaders all the privileges they had formerly enjoyed, and which his enemies and theirs had taken away.

Jerusalem was now won, and a governor had to be appointed. For this post there was no very keen competition. Bohemond had received Antioch, Baldwin had Edessa. Stephen of Blois and Hugh of Vermandois were in Europe. Robert of Normandy was anxious to return. Raymond and Godfrey remained. But Raymond was unpopular and had to content himself with Laodicea. Godfrey was chosen for Jerusalem, and a better choice could not have been made. With a modesty which did him credit, Godfrey refused the title of king, accepting that of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre. With Godfrey remained Tancred with 300 knights and 2,000 foot soldiers.

Scarcely was Godfrey appointed when news reached Jerusalem that an Egyptian army was gathering at Ascalon. Fortunately the crusaders had not yet scattered, so they were able to march in strength against the enemy. The Egyptians, taken completely by surprise, were utterly overthrown, "cut down as men fell beasts at the shambles".

After these events the crusaders turned their faces homeward. Partly from fear of their prowess, partly from thankfulness at their departure, the peoples through whose lands they passed, facilitated their progress in every way. Most of them reached home safely, and were heroes for the rest of their days. Urban was already dead. Peter the Hermit retired to a monastery and appears in history no more. Thus did the curtain fall upon the first act of the strange tragedy.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECOND CRUSADE.

1099. PALESTINE had been rescued from the Moslem, and Jerusalem was the seat of a Latin monarchy. The triumph of the crusaders seemed complete. Godfrey appointed a commission to prepare a code of laws for his kingdom. He did not live to see the code in operation. It was not finally settled until the reign of Fulk. It was known as the "assize of Jerusalem," and formed an interesting synopsis of the feudal customs of Europe as they then existed. The code had little practical bearing upon government in Palestine. Some centuries later the code, in an altered form, became law in the Latin kingdom of Cyprus.

The news that Jerusalem was in Christian hands caused much excitement in Europe. Some who had gone to the crusade and returned ignominiously determined to go back and recover by fresh effort the laurels they had lost, others who had not gone at all went now.

Three huge hosts set forth. Profiting little by the experience of their predecessors, they marched as if on a pleasure excursion, men and women of every rank. They got to Asia with some degree of comfort, but after that their experiences were terrible. The scorching sun, the scarcity of water, the incessant attacks of the enemy, made their journey one pitiable record of misery and death. A few leaders and a handful of men struggled through, the rest perished. Hundreds of ladies, many of noble birth, had accompanied the expeditions, anticipating a triumphal march from Constantinople to Jerusalem. Such as did not die on the way were reserved for the slave market and the harem. Hundreds of thousands of lives were sacrificed in these meaningless expeditions.

One striking result of the crusades was the establishment of three semi-religious, semi-military orders, the Hospitallers or Knights of St. John, the Knights Templar, and the Teutonic Knights.

The Hospitallers or Knights of St. John were founded before the Crusades. Early in the eleventh century, in the 1023.
days when pilgrims were protected by the Moslem rulers, the caliphs allowed the merchants of the Italian seaport of Amalfi, who were financially interested in the shipment of pilgrims, to establish a hospice at Jerusalem for poor and sick Latin pilgrims. The Amalfi merchants secured a site near the Holy Sepulchre and built a commodious hospice. The actual patron of the order was not St. John the Baptist, but St. John Eleemon (the compassionate), patriarch of Alexandria, but as this saint was little known the more familiar one became gradually recognised as patron.

When Jerusalem was captured there were many wounded, 1099.
and the Hospitallers showed them much kindness. When, therefore, Godfrey de Bouillon was elected governor he rewarded them with the revenues of his estates in Brabant. Other princes followed Godfrey's example, and the Hospitallers became rich. In 1113 their order was formally sanctioned by the pope, and in 1118, following the example of the Knights Templar, a younger and rival society, they enlarged the scope of their order so as to include military duties.

The Knights Templar were established a century later than 1114.
the Hospitallers. Hugh de Payne, a Burgundian knight, who had himself made the journey to Jerusalem, and witnessed the way pilgrims were maltreated, associated himself with eight like-minded knights and formed a society to protect them. King Baldwin II. gave them quarters on Mount Moriah, near the site of the Temple, and the Mosque of Omar was for a time the Church of the order. They were formally approved by the pope in 1128, and were, like the Knights of St. John, gradually endowed by their admirers until they became rich.

The Hospitallers and Templars established houses in im-

portant centres which served as homes for their aged and infirm knights, and as recruiting stations for young knights. Through them there came a constant supply of warriors for the East.

1128. A third order, the Teutonic Knights of St. Mary's Hospital at Jerusalem, was founded in 1128, its members at first adhering strictly to religious and charitable work. After-
1190. wards, during the siege of Acre, the order took the sick and wounded under their care, sheltering them in tents made out of the sails of the vessels. Thus they gained high patronage and were greatly esteemed. At a later period when the emperor Frederick came to Palestine under excommunication and the other orders held aloof, the Teutonic Knights stood by him faithfully.

The Knights of St. John wore a black mantle, and upon the breast an eight-pointed white cross; the Knights Templar wore a white mantle and had a plain red cross on the left breast; the Teutonic Knights had a black cross on a white mantle.

The military orders were useful to the Latin kingdom whilst it lasted. They became very wealthy. The Templars possessed 7,000 European manors. The Knights of St. John were also rich. Wealth brought abuses on both orders. The members became avaricious and arrogant, and fought amongst themselves. The pope had freed the Templars in Europe from other jurisdiction than that of their grand master and himself. Thus they became a danger to the states where they were established; their power excited fear, their wealth cupidity.

The loss of Jerusalem in 1187 deprived both Hospitallers and Templars of their head-quarters. They established themselves at Acre, and remained there until 1291, when that city also fell. The Templars then removed their head-quarters to Cyprus, where they could do little. In 1310 Philip IV. and pope Clement V. suppressed the order in France. The suppression was justified, but not the cruelty by which it was accompanied. The members of the order were tried, sometimes on baseless charges; some were tortured, some even

burned. Others were exiled, and the property of all was confiscated. In England the order was suppressed by Edward II., but without the cruelties practised in France. The Knights were allowed to enter monasteries. The landed possessions of the Templars were given to the Knights of St. John.

The Hospitallers went to Rhodes when Acre fell, and did good service by holding that island against the Ottoman Turks. When the island was conquered in 1522 they established a new home in Malta. They managed to avoid the jealousy of monarchs, and thus to escape extinction. They have long ceased to be a military body, but as a charitable institution still exist. One of their establishments is in Clerkenwell, London.

After the fall of the Latin kingdom in Palestine the Teutonic knights were transferred to the shores of the Baltic, and entered on a career of conquest there. They carried on a work of conversion and subjugation amongst the heathen of Lithuania and Prussia, and, holding fast to the lands which they subjugated, their grand master became the sovereign of the State which has grown into the modern kingdom of Prussia.

Godfrey de Bouillon reigned as Baron of the Holy Sepulchre for but one year. Though in the heat of warfare he had shown himself capable of much cruelty, he ruled with fairness and wisdom, and died lamented. He was buried in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, where his tomb is still to be seen.

Godfrey was succeeded by Baldwin I., his brother, who had been ruling at Edessa. Hearing that Godfrey was dead, Baldwin transferred the principality of Edessa to his cousin and namesake, Baldwin du Bourg, and hastened to Jerusalem. On his way he was attacked by the emirs of Damascus and Emesa, and defeated them.

Baldwin's election was opposed by Dagobert, the papal legate, who coveted the position for himself, but Baldwin's promptitude made Dagobert's candidature impossible, and he unwillingly acquiesced in the appointment.

After his coronation Baldwin captured Arsuf and Cæsarea.

Next year, when at Jaffa, he heard that an Egyptian army
1102. was at Ramleh. He had with him at the time but 200 knights, but he at once left Jaffa and fell upon the enemy. For the moment they fell back, but, the smallness of his force becoming at last apparent, they rallied, and his followers were slain almost to a man. Amongst them fell Stephen of Blois and many brave knights. Baldwin escaped.

After the defeat of the Christians at Ramleh, Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem, was assailed by the Egyptians. Baldwin, seeing that it was in great danger, embarked upon the ship of Godric, an English pirate, and broke through the Egyptian cordon into the harbour. His arrival encouraged the citizens, and they were able to hold the city until reinforcements arrived.

King Baldwin had many financial difficulties, and was not particular as to how he raised revenue. Tribute from unconquered towns was legitimate; promiscuous plunder and the robbing of caravans was less so. He married a rich wife, Adela, widow of Roger, count of Sicily. She arrived in a ship rich with gold and gems, and brought 1,000 warriors in her train, but, after three years' experience of life in Palestine, she returned home.

In his last years Baldwin I. invaded Egypt, and got within three days' journey of Cairo. But he fell sick and had to retreat to El Arish, a city on the frontier. There he died, and his body was buried in the Holy Sepulchre near that of Godfrey his brother.

1118. The year that saw the death of Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, saw the death of Alexius, the Byzantine emperor. This monarch has been attacked unsparingly by historians, and to his perfidy most of the disasters of the early crusaders have been attributed. There is little need to seek any such explanation. For the most part the crusaders showed a lack of wisdom and an inability to profit by experience which sufficiently accounts for all the disasters they experienced.

It is usual for nations to believe others less honest than themselves. Amongst the Romans Punic treachery was pro-

verbial; amongst the crusaders Greek perfidy passed into a proverb: and to-day the Oriental is believed by the Western to be the most treacherous of men. Yet the Carthaginians were as honourable as the Romans; the Greeks were no worse than the crusaders; and the Oriental is to those who win his confidence the most faithful of friends. Mutual suspicion is generally the result of mutual misunderstanding. The difference between men is largely a question of environment, at heart they are much the same.

Alexius had a most difficult part to play. As Gibbon well puts it, he was like a Bengal shepherd "ruined by the accomplishment of his own wishes; he had prayed for water: the Ganges was turned into his grounds, and his flock and cottage were swept away by the inundation. . . . I cannot believe that Alexius maliciously conspired against the life or honour of the French heroes. The promiscuous multitudes of Peter the Hermit were savage beasts, alike destitute of humanity and reason; nor was it possible for Alexius to prevent or deplore their destruction. The troops of Godfrey were less contemptible, but not less suspicious to the Greek emperor . . . Jerusalem might be forgotten in the prospect of Constantinople" (*Roman Empire*, chap. lviii.).

That the fears of Alexius were not groundless, subsequent history proved, for, in the long run, the crusaders destroyed the Byzantine empire. For the moment, however, after the first crusade, the empire seemed to have profited. The Seljukian Turks had been driven from Bithynia; and the sultan of Roum had to withdraw his capital from Nicæa to Iconium.

Most of the leaders of the first crusade had now passed away. Godfrey died at Jerusalem, 1100; Hugh of Vermandois at Tarsus, 1101; Stephen of Blois at Ramleh, 1102; Raymond of Toulouse at Tripoli, 1105; Bohemond, captured by the Turks in a petty expedition, 1103, was imprisoned for two years, during which Tancred ruled at Antioch in his stead. When Bohemond was released he fell to war with Alexius, who attacked Antioch, and reduced him to great extremities.

Bohemond determined to obtain help from the West, and realising that his own presence was necessary in order to obtain adequate assistance, he left Tancred to govern Antioch, spread abroad a rumour of his death, and escaped from the city in a coffin. He reached Italy in safety, and thence passed to France, where he was well received by king Philip I. whose daughter he married. He then declared a crusade against the Greeks, crossed the Adriatic with 5,000 horse and 40,000 foot, and besieged Durazzo. The army was one of adventurers similar to that with which William the Conqueror had subdued England. But Bohemond could not fight a decisive battle at once as William had done, he had to sit down and besiege Durazzo. Soon he got into such difficulties that he had no alternative but to make peace with Alexius, declare himself his liegeman, and engage to hold Antioch as a fief of the Byzantine empire. He was greatly disappointed, and was perhaps planning revenge when he died in 1109. Tancred continued to rule in Antioch as regent but died in 1112.

Robert of Normandy reached home just too late to secure the succession to England on the death of his brother William
1101. Rufus. He invaded England claiming the crown, but the English supported his brother Henry and he had to content himself with Normandy. Quarrels broke out between the brothers and war ensued. Robert was defeated at Tenchebrai, taken prisoner, and sent to Cardiff Castle where he died, 1135.

Robert of Flanders survived the crusade eleven years, and was killed by a fall from his horse.

1118. When Baldwin I. was dying at El Arish he nominated Baldwin du Bourg, his cousin, who had succeeded him at Edessa, as his successor in Jerusalem, and he was elected. Baldwin II. was a man advanced in years, cautious and capable. Whilst endeavouring to relieve count Joscelyn, now count of Edessa, Baldwin II. was himself captured and confined at Khartpert. In his absence Eustace Grenier was regent.

Up to this time the Venetians had held aloof from the

Crusades, though the Genoese and Pisans had often helped the crusaders. The Venetians now determined to share in the plunder, and offered to assist in the conquest of Tyre on condition of obtaining one-third of the conquest. The city was accordingly besieged and fell in six months, the Venetian fleet playing an important part.

A month later King Baldwin II. was released. He reigned 1124.
for seven years longer and then died. He was the last of the great heroes of the first crusade who had remained in Palestine.

Fulk of Anjou, great-grandson of the Fulk already men- 1131.
tioned who made three pilgrimages to Jerusalem for his sins, and son-in-law of Baldwin II., now ascended the throne. He reigned successfully for twelve years, and died from the effects of a hunting accident. He also was buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Fulk left two sons, Baldwin, aged thirteen, and Amalric, 1143.
aged seven. Baldwin III. succeeded to his father, Melisend, the queen, being regent.

A change was now coming over the Moslem world. For a time despair had seized upon the Mohammedans. "The Franks," says one of their writers, "were spread far and wide; their troops were numerous and their hands extended as if to seize all Islam." The Frankish possessions stretched from Egypt to the Euphrates, and the few cities that remained unconquered paid tribute.

But now a Moslem conqueror arose, Zenghi, the ruler of Mosul, an important city on the Tigris. Zenghi's first conquests were made at the expense of his Moslem rivals who dwelt between the Tigris and the Euphrates. But when he had conquered these he still pressed westward. Aleppo yielded to him, then Hamah, both Moslem cities.

Zenghi first crossed swords with the Franks by attacking 1130.
Athareb, a frontier fortress. For some years afterwards he was engaged in civil war, but from this he emerged stronger than ever. His chief opponent amongst the Franks had been Joscelin, count of Edessa, to whom Baldwin du Bourg had

resigned his principality when he became king of Jerusalem. But the old, warlike count died, and was succeeded by his son Joscelin II., a brave but careless man, "who lost the realm his father had ruled so well".

1144. Zenghi besieged Edessa and captured it in a month. Armenian citizens were spared, the Franks were slain without mercy. Two years later Zenghi was assassinated. Hoping to profit by his death, Joscelin II. tried to recover Edessa and made a night attack upon the city. He captured the city but not the citadel, and when Noureddin, the son of Zenghi, came with a relieving army, the Franks were caught between the two armies and cut to pieces. Joscelin himself escaped.

The intelligence of the fall of Edessa created alarm throughout Europe. It was the first great Christian reverse since the capture of Jerusalem, and it inspired the princes of Europe to undertake a second crusade. Half a century had elapsed since the first; its disasters had been forgotten; its successes only were remembered. Eugenius III., the pope at this time, sent letters to Louis VII. of France and to his chief nobles, and delegated Bernard of Clairvaux to arouse Europe. Bernard was about fifty-four years of age, and had a European fame for sanctity and learning. He was highly intellectual and eloquent. His influence enrolled the two chief crowned heads of Europe in the enterprise, and made the crusade at once popular.

Bernard's first convert was Louis VII. Him he found eager for the enterprise. He had quarrelled with Innocent II., the former pope, and been excommunicated. This had led to war with the count of Champagne, and in the course of the war at Vitry 1,300 subjects of the count were burned alive in a church where they had taken refuge. Louis was so shocked by the calamity or sacrilege that he made peace with both count and pope, and determined to quiet his accusing conscience by a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. When therefore intelligence reached Europe that Edessa had fallen, and that the Christians were being driven from their dominions, it was a

trumpet call to Louis, and when Eugenius III. exhorted him to take up arms he consented without demur.

At a council held at Vézelay the French king appeared, 1146.
wearing the royal robes, side by side with Bernard, and when the monk, after an impassioned harangue, appealed for crusaders, Louis was the first to volunteer. Eleanor, his wife, followed, and the nobles and greater portion of the assembly took the cross.

Bernard next passed into Germany. There he had more difficulty, for Conrad III., the emperor, thought he had troubles enough at home without going abroad to seek them. At length, however, Bernard's eloquence prevailed, Conrad gave way, and many distinguished princes with him joined the enterprise.

When the preparations were complete, two great armies, the one under the command of Louis VII. the other under Conrad III., set out. The gross numbers were enormous, but as on former occasions there were many encumbrances, ladies of the court, soldiers' wives and children.

Conrad was first on the march. He and Manuel, the 1147.
Byzantine emperor, had married sisters, but were not on friendly terms, and Manuel viewed the whole enterprise with disfavour. The crusaders marched through Hungary to the Eastern Empire. Everywhere they were met by black looks. The gates of cities were closed against them, and such food as was supplied was let down in baskets from the walls. Nor was the suspicion unreasonable, for though many of the crusaders were honest men, they were accompanied by a great number of thieves and desperate characters. Troops had to march parallel with them to restrain their lawlessness.

At last the host reached Byzantium. Conrad did not see Manuel, but came to some agreement, guides were provided, and they crossed the Bosphorus.

It was summer when the tableland of Asia Minor was reached. The crusaders found neither food nor water, and men and horses fell in crowds. Thus enfeebled they were

attacked incessantly by the Turks, and proved an easy prey. At last they had no alternative but to retrace their steps, but only one-tenth of the original host reached the shelter of Nicæa.

Louis set forth somewhat later at the head of a noble host: 100,000 barons, knights, and fighting-men, besides a vast number of non-combatants. Starting from Metz, he crossed the Rhine at Worms, the Danube at Ratisbon, traversed Hungary, and entered the Eastern Empire. Here they met with many difficulties, and so exasperated were they when they reached Constantinople that some even proposed to besiege it. But Louis refused to agree, and made friends with Manuel.

When they had crossed the Bosphorus and reached Nicæa, the French were joined by the miserable remnant of the German expedition. The armies combined, and hoping that he might thus escape Conrad's fate, Louis adopted a different route. He marched by the coast, by way of Ephesus and then inland up the Meander Valley. Up to a certain point all was well, but when they entered Turkish territory the usual misery began. Not far from Laodicea they were attacked, and heavily defeated, losing their baggage, and many lives.

After much suffering the remnant of the expedition reached
1148. the seaport of Attalia in Pamphylia. Here Louis, with his queen and barons, embarked for Syria, leaving 7,000 men to get to Antioch as they best might. Louis landed safely at the mouth of the Orontes, the unfortunates who had been left chose between death, Islam, or slavery. Three thousand of them preferred Islam.

After resting in Antioch, Louis went to Jerusalem. There he met Conrad, who had come round from Constantinople to Acre by sea. A council was held with Baldwin III., the recovery of Edessa was postponed, and it was determined to besiege Damascus. The siege ended in a fiasco. Conrad returned to Germany in disgust. Louis remained a year longer, hoping to win laurels of some sort, and then went home. He reached Provence with 300 knights, the wreck of the mighty
1149. force with which he had set out two years before.

The disastrous issue of the crusade was a heavy blow to Europe. The reputation of Bernard of Clairvaux suffered greatly, for he had predicted its success with confidence. He now attributed its failure to the vices of its leaders. This was at any rate as good a reason as the perfidy of the Greeks. Bernard lived four years longer, but refrained from again arousing warlike passion amongst the people.

The first crusade had produced much misery, but some fruit. The second did nothing but mischief. The Latins in Palestine gained nothing by it, the Moslems learned how little they had to fear from Western Europe. And in France and Germany myriads of homes lay desolate.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THIRD CRUSADE.

We have seen how the rise of Zenghi led to the fall of Edessa, and the fall of Edessa to the second crusade. In this crusade two great armies, the one German, the other French, were annihilated, and their leaders, Conrad and Louis, returned to their dominions deeply humiliated. Joscelin II., count of Edessa, made another effort to recover his patrimony, but was
1149. defeated, captured, blinded and imprisoned. He died in prison. The territory he had governed fell into the hands of Noureddin, son of Zenghi, who crowned his father's work by the conquest of Damascus.

The years that followed abounded in war and foray; the Moslems increasing in strength, the Latins decreasing. Baldwin III., king of Jerusalem, did his best, but made little headway, for he had in Noureddin a foeman worthy of his
1159. steel. Baldwin married Theodora, niece of Manuel, the Greek emperor, and hoped to have his help against his enemies. The emperor appeared in Syria with a great army, but, appeased by Saracen diplomacy, and alarmed by rumours of insurrection at home, he returned, having accomplished little. Baldwin died some years later, and was succeeded by his brother Amalric.

1163. The reign of Amalric brings us into touch with Egypt. Noureddin, sultan of Aleppo, was able to dominate Northern Palestine, but Southern Palestine could best be dominated from the Egyptian side. There were at this time two caliphs in the East, one at Bagdad, one at Cairo. The caliph at Cairo was a weak man, the creature of his chief officers, of whom two fought for supremacy. One of these sought the aid of Amalric,

the Frank king of Jerusalem; the other the aid of Noureddin. Noureddin saw that, if he could gain Egypt, and thus dominate the Latin kingdom both from the north and the south, it must soon fall. He therefore seized the opportunity thus afforded, and sent as his general Shirkuh, the uncle of Saladin. Amalric saw the danger that threatened him, and he also took action, determined either to control Egypt or have it for himself. He sent an army, and had success, capturing Pelusium and Alexandria, and penetrating even to Cairo. He then returned to Palestine in triumph.

Amalric had married Maria, a grandniece of the emperor Manuel, and the emperor impressed upon him the weakness of Egypt, and showed him how easily it might be conquered. Accordingly Amalric again invaded the country and captured Pelusium. But when he advanced on Cairo he found himself outflanked by Shirkuh, and had to retreat. Aided by a Greek fleet, he then besieged Damietta, but had to retire foiled. His withdrawal settled the fate of Egypt, which now turned entirely from the Franks to the Moslems. Shirkuh died, but was succeeded by Saladin, his nephew, a man of rare merit.

Recognising Saladin's ability, Noureddin deposed the caliph of Egypt, thus ending a Fatimite dynasty which had ruled in Egypt for two centuries, and made Saladin governor. Saladin was not only able but popular, and Noureddin soon saw that he was more likely to be a rival than a lieutenant. Accordingly he determined to invade Egypt, and take the government into his own hands, but whilst he was contemplating these things he died.

Noureddin's heir was but eleven years of age, so Saladin 1174
seized the supreme power, and proclaimed himself sultan both at Cairo and at Damascus. He was now in the position to which Noureddin had aspired, and had the Latin kingdom at his mercy.

Two months after the death of Noureddin Amalric also died, and was succeeded by his son, Baldwin IV., a lad of thirteen, and a leper. Raymond, count of Tripoli, great-

grandson of that Raymond of Toulouse who had been a leader in the first crusade, became regent for Baldwin IV. He did what he could, but the Franks were now overmatched by Saladin, whose forces swept the country.

1185. Baldwin IV. died at the age of twenty-three, and was succeeded by Baldwin V., another child, son of Sibylla his sister by her first husband, the marquis of Montferrat. Raymond continued to act as regent, and wisely made a four years' truce with Saladin. But the Franks were disunited, and, on the
1186. death of the child king, Raymond was thrust aside, and Guy of Lusignan, Sibylla's second husband, was crowned. Most of the barons accepted Guy's kingship as an accomplished fact, but some remained implacable, among whom was Raymond.

About this time Reginald of Châtillon broke the truce which had been made with Saladin, plundering Saracen caravans, and even threatening to attack Arabia. Infuriated by the breach of faith, Saladin gathered forces from every side and proclaimed a holy war.

1187. Saladin's first engagement was with the Hospitallers and Templars. Led by their grand-masters, they opposed him at Nazareth, but were overthrown. A general muster of the Franks was ordered by Guy, and 50,000 assembled, Raymond, count of Tiberias, being among the number. Intelligence reached the host that Saladin was besieging Tiberias, and some advised Guy to march to its relief. Raymond, who was the one chiefly interested, advised the king not to attempt to relieve the city, nor to meet Saladin's huge forces in the field at all, but to retreat and let him weary his men and spend his strength in sieges. The advice was good, but Guy, believing Raymond to be his enemy, would not be persuaded, and gave the order to advance. The result was fatal. At Hattin, near Tiberias, the crusading army was encircled by the Moslems. A battle was fought, long and fierce, but in the end the Franks were routed, and most of their leaders were either captured or slain. King Guy was among the captives, also Reginald the truce-breaker. Guy was treated with consideration; Reginald

was slain. Many Hospitallers and Templars were executed by Saladin for having broken truce.

The Franks had now no army in the field, and Saladin was everywhere triumphant. Acre, Jericho, Ramleh, Arsuf, Jaffa, Beyrout and Ascalon fell in succession. Tripoli and Tyre were as yet unconquered, the latter being saved by the heroism of Conrad of Montferrat, the brother of the first husband of queen Sibylla.

On 18th September Jerusalem was invested, and on 1187.
2nd October it capitulated. Saladin laid aside all revengeful thoughts, and treated the inhabitants with a magnanimity to which the Frankish records afford few parallels. The Mosque of Omar was cleansed, and again prayers to Allah went up from Mount Moriah in Moslem fashion.

The fall of the Holy City made a great sensation in Europe. It is said to have killed Urban III., but he was dead before the intelligence could have reached him. The pride of the Western princes was touched, and all were stirred up to avenge so great a disaster. It seemed intolerable that a Saracen chief should thus defy Christendom. Frederic I., emperor of Germany, Henry II. of England, Philip II. of France, Richard of Nor- 1188.
mandy, the duke of Burgundy, the count of Champagne and many others assumed the cross.

Two years' delay was given for preparation for the crusade, and a tax, known as the Saladin tithe, was imposed in England and perhaps in France, on all who did not take a personal share in the expedition. The tax was levied on laity and clergy alike and continued to be levied long after Saladin's death.

Frederick I., called Barbarossa because of his red beard, was the first of the crusaders to move. He was a powerful king, an astute statesman, and an experienced general. Though sixty-seven years of age he threw himself into the enterprise with ardour. He raised a splendid army, and, determined to avoid the difficulties of former leaders, forbade women to accompany the expedition, or pilgrims who had not

enough money to maintain themselves. Whilst preparing he sent in knightly fashion a letter to Saladin and received a courteous reply. In his answer Saladin said: "If you wish for war we will meet you in the power of the Lord; but if you wish for peace we will restore to you the Holy Cross, liberate all Christian captives, permit pilgrims to come freely and do them good". Thus Saladin offered freely all that the Christians had formerly enjoyed and all they could hope permanently to enjoy. But the Western princes were too fond of fighting to receive as a gift that which they might obtain at the point of the sword.

1189. Frederick set out from Ratisbon, passed through Hungary, and reached the Eastern Empire. There, as usual, obstacles were put in the way of the crusaders, and hostilities broke out. But Isaac Angelus, the Byzantine emperor at this time, was soon brought to terms.

1190. Frederick wintered in Thrace and crossed to Asia in the spring. The sultan of Iconium had promised to aid him, and obstructed him instead; but Frederick pressed forward, defeated his army, and took Iconium by storm. There he obtained every required supply, and having now passed the region which had been so fatal to former crusading armies he resumed his march under favourable conditions. But man proposes and God disposes. As the army passed through Cilicia their advance was checked by the River Selef. The bridge was narrow, and whilst the troops were crossing tediously, Frederick either bathed or attempted to cross the river. He was swept off his feet by the current, and dragged from the water in a dying state. It was a sad ending for a great man.

Frederick's second son, the duke of Swabia, was in the host and became leader. But he had not his father's prestige and he failed to keep the host together. Some returned, some went to Tripoli, some accompanied him to Antioch. Frederick's remains were buried there in the Church of St. Peter, and his eldest son Henry, who had remained at home as regent, reigned in his stead.

We saw how Guy, the king of Jerusalem had been taken captive by Saladin. Saladin released him on parole, Guy undertaking to return to Europe. But paying no regard to his promise he raised what forces he could and took the field. First he marched to Tyre, which Conrad of Montferrat still held, and demanded admittance as his liege lord. But Conrad bade him go and rest somewhere else. Tyre was his, he said, and he meant to keep it. Thus rebuffed, Guy departed to Ptolemais (Acre) and besieged it, thus beginning a notable chapter in crusading history. 1188.

Acre was a city strongly fortified by nature and art, and Guy's small army was at first insufficient to invest the city. But as time went on his forces increased by arrivals from Europe, until about 80,000 men were engaged in the siege. These would have sufficed for every purpose had they been good men and of one mind. But they were neither. The camp was a centre of debauchery, and between the different nationalities there was little cohesion. To add to the difficulties of the situation, Saladin seized the surrounding heights and besieged the besiegers. 1189.

The advent of Frederick with his splendid German army had been eagerly expected, and the news of his death, and the arrival of the meagre remnant of his army, created profound depression in the camp. There was also much pestilence, and the duke of Swabia was amongst the victims. It was amidst these troubles that the Teutonic knights distinguished themselves by their earnest work amongst the sick and wounded, and thus earned a high reputation for their order. 1190.

Sibylla, the titular queen of Jerusalem, died at this time, and to other miseries was added a dispute about the succession between Guy de Lusignan and Conrad of Montferrat. The claim of Guy was based on his marriage with Sibylla; that of Conrad on his marriage with Isabel her sister. As Sibylla was dead, Conrad's claim was now as good as Guy's. The title was empty enough, yet the contest waxed furious and split the camp into two parties. Civil war was only averted by the

suggestion that the matter should be left to the decision of Richard I. of England and Philip II. of France, who were now on their way.

Richard I. had no sooner been crowned king on the death of his father Henry II. than he proceeded to raise funds for the crusade. Henry had already raised funds for that purpose, but the money had been spent on the war between father and son, so more must be had. Accordingly, money was raised by hook or by crook. Manors, offices, charters, privileges, including the privilege of staying at home,—everything that would fetch a price was sold. The king declared that he would have sold London had he found a purchaser. The Jews were plundered and, sad to say, massacred as well, forced loans were raised, and the resources of England were drained to the utmost. At last, to the general relief, Richard departed from England with his treasure and a turbulent crowd of followers.

Richard and Philip determined to proceed to the Holy
1190. Land by sea. They met at Vézelai, marched together to Lyons, and then separated to meet again in Sicily. They spent six months there and nearly wrecked the enterprise.

Richard quarrelled with Tancred, king of Sicily, about the rights of Joanna his sister, widow of the former king. In order to coerce Tancred, Richard seized Messina. But in doing this he offended Philip who threatened war. Cordiality was never restored, and matters were made worse when Richard, who was engaged to Alice, Philip's sister, threw her over in favour of Berengaria, the princess of Navarre. When Richard's mother, Eleanor, brought Berengaria to Sicily, Philip at once sailed for Acre.

Richard sailed a few days later. His fleet was scattered by
1191. a storm, and some ships were wrecked on Cyprus. The crews were badly treated, and, when Richard arrived shortly after, he demanded redress. Isaac Comnenus, the king, refused it, whereupon Richard conquered the island, and made Isaac his prisoner. In Sicily Richard married Berengaria, and leaving a garrison set sail for Acre.

With the arrival of Philip and Richard at Acre new life was infused into the siege, and the inhabitants seeing no hope of relief capitulated. The condition was that their lives should be spared, and they promised on Saladin's behalf that he would pay the usual ransom. As Saladin delayed in fulfilling the conditions thus put upon him, Richard declaring that faith had been broken ordered 5,000 Moslems to be slaughtered.

The breach between Philip and Richard widened at Acre. The question of the kingship was referred to them. Guy had hastened to Cyprus to meet Richard, and obtained the promise of his support. On the other hand, Philip supported Conrad. A compromise was at length arrived at. Guy was to hold the crown whilst he lived, and at his death it was to pass to Conrad and his heirs.

Philip was now utterly weary of the crusade, so he handed over the command of the French forces to the duke of Burgundy and went home. This left Richard commander-in-chief, but of a very disunited army.

The crusaders marched from Acre southward towards Jerusalem. They were continually attacked, but by keeping the shore and being in constant touch with their fleet they made progress. Not far from Cæsarea there was a general action with Saladin's army. The battle was fierce but the crusaders triumphed. Had Richard, pursuing his advantage, marched instantly on Jerusalem, the Arab historians acknowledge that it might have fallen. But he did not go to Jerusalem, but to Jaffa. Jaffa soon capitulated, but precious time had been lost, and more time was lost refortifying the city. The army then marched to Ramleh, but the winter was at hand and the siege of Jerusalem had to be postponed. The opportunity had passed. Saladin had reprovisioned and fortified the city, and its capture was now extremely doubtful.

Whilst affairs were in this state Conrad of Montferrat was assassinated, and Tyre was held by his widow, queen Isabella. Henry, count of Champagne, Richard's nephew, hurried to Tyre and married queen Isabella, thus becoming, through his

wife's rights, titular king of Jerusalem. Richard was accessory to the deed, but he compensated Guy de Lusignan by giving him Cyprus, which proved a more enduring inheritance, for the De Lusignan dynasty reigned there for 200 years.

Once more the crusaders advanced on Jerusalem. But
1192. when within sight of the city a council of war decided that the army was not strong enough for the enterprise. They were undoubtedly right. The force was insufficient for investment, they had no commissariat worthy of the name, and Saladin was in the field with an army which could sever them from their base at any moment. Even while they considered the question, Saladin attacked Jaffa, and only the most heroic efforts on the part of Richard and those who still followed him saved the seaport from capture.

The crusading army had now practically dissolved, and Richard saw that peace was imperative. Saladin was not unreasonable, and a truce was arranged for three years and eight months. The Franks were to hold Jaffa, Acre and Tyre with the strip of coast land between, and pilgrims were to have free access to Jerusalem. As the Christians had possession of Tyre before the war, and Saladin had offered free access to pilgrims, the acquisition of Acre and Jaffa with the strip of coast land between was the sole fruit of this mighty enterprise which had so drained the wealth of Western Europe.

Richard I. now turned homewards, but his adventures were not yet over. His queen and soldiers had preceded him, and he followed with some companions in a single ship. He met with storms, and was wrecked in the Adriatic. Trying to cross Europe in the guise of a pilgrim, he was detected, captured, and brought to Leopold, duke of Austria, whom he had grossly insulted during the siege of Acre. Leopold sold him for 60,000 pieces of silver to the emperor Henry VI., of whom also Richard had made a mortal enemy. Henry VI. guarded him closely, tried him before the Diet of the Empire at Worms, and at last sold him to his English subjects for £100,000.

Before Richard's return to England Saladin had passed away. He died in Damascus, and before his death he ordered that his shroud should be carried through the streets of the city, while a herald proclaimed: "This is all that remains of Saladin, the conqueror of the East". 1193.

CHAPTER V.

THE FOURTH CRUSADE.

THE third crusade, followed by the treaty with Saladin, had left Jaffa, Acre and Tyre in the hands of the Franks, and, by way of these ports, pilgrims might travel in safety to Jerusalem. The treaty was honourably observed, and the Christians of the East did not complain.

1193. After the death of Saladin, his empire was divided between his three sons, and Malek-Ahdel, his brother. There was civil war between these, and pope Celestine III., hoping to profit by the dissension, appealed for a new crusade. At first there was no response to his appeal, but at length Henry VI. determined to emulate Frederick Barbarossa, his father, and to lead a crusading army to Syria. There was no justification for the invasion; the Christians of Syria did not wish to renew hostilities, and declared that war would do them harm and not good.

1195. Three Teutonic armies set out; one led by the archbishop of Mayence; one under the dukes of Saxony and Brabant one under Henry himself. The first army sailed from Apulia to Acre. When it reached Palestine it began ravaging the Moslem lands, notwithstanding the protests of the Christians The result was that the Moslems healed their differences and united under Malek-Ahdel. Malek-Ahdel conquered Jaffa, and things were going badly for the crusaders when the second army landed at Beyrout, defeated the Saracens and turned the tide.

Henry VI. had taken the third army to Sicily, of which island he was nominally king. He had left the government of Sicily to his officers, and their oppression had raised rebellion

This rebellion he crushed out with brutality. When he had thus secured the island for himself, he sent such forces as he could spare to Palestine.

The three armies were now together, and it was proposed that they should march on Jerusalem. But winter was approaching, so they postponed their attack until the spring. As usual the delay was fatal. To keep the men out of mischief they occupied themselves with the siege of Thoron, a fortress between Lebanon and the Mediterranean. Thoron was strongly fortified, but the besiegers made such progress that the garrison offered to surrender if their lives were spared. But when they saw from the difference of opinion amongst the crusaders that some of them meant to have their blood, they determined to sell it dearly, and fought with such energy that the crusaders gave up the contest. Soon after news came that Henry 1197.
VI. was dead, whereupon many of the knights and barons went home. A remnant of the force was left at Jaffa, and these were surprised during a festival and massacred to a man.

Celestine died, and Innocent III. now filled the papal chair. 1198.
He was an extremely ambitious man, and, notwithstanding the lamentable experiences above mentioned, he called upon the rulers of Europe to once more gird on the sword. The rulers were slow to move, but at last a sufficient number of knights and nobles gave ear to the appeal and assumed the cross. They held a conference, elected count Theobald of Champagne as 1200.
their leader, and fixed 1202 as the date of departure. Anxious to avoid the misfortunes which had so often attended crusaders on the land journey, they arranged with the republic of Venice for sea transport. The Venetians undertook to furnish the requisite ships for men and horses, provisions for a year and fifty fighting galleys, in return for a large sum in cash, and half the cities and lands that might be conquered.

It happened that at this time there was a failure of the inundation in Egypt and a sore famine. To famine had succeeded plague, and 100,000 people are said to have died in Cairo alone. In the twentieth century a visitation of this sort

would lead to a general subscription on behalf of the sufferers, but in the thirteenth men could think of nothing better than adding to the sorrows of an already profoundly miserable people by bringing upon them the horrors of war. By the advice of the pope, Egypt was chosen as the destination of the crusading fleet.

Venice was now a power in Europe. Though her territory was small, her commercial interests were large, and she was always eager to further them. But she was at peace with Egypt, and had a profitable trade with that country. The Venetians were on good terms with Malek-Ahdel, they enjoyed special privileges at Alexandria, and they carried on by way of Egypt an extensive trade with India. It did not suit the Venetians therefore to transport the crusaders to Egypt, and Dandolo, the doge of Venice, when he contracted with the crusaders had no intention of fulfilling that part of the bargain. Unfortunately, whilst Dandolo was willing to spare Egypt, he was not so sensitive about other places. From the time that the crusaders began to gather round Venice, he determined to use their strength purely in the interests of the republic.

Circumstances conspired to help Dandolo in his schemes. Alexius III., who now reigned in Byzantium, had deposed and imprisoned his brother Isaac II., who was himself a usurper. Isaac's son, also named Alexius, escaped, and took refuge with his relative the emperor Philip of Germany. Theobald the chosen leader of the crusade died, and Boniface of Montferrat, a man of a lower type, was chosen instead. Boniface, who was also related to the imprisoned monarch, had visited Philip's court and met young Alexius there. Perhaps it was even then arranged, with the approval of Dandolo, that the crusaders should sail by way of Constantinople and place Alexius on the throne. Such of the chiefs as were open to bribery would be privy to the plot, the others would be kept in ignorance.

1202. At the time appointed for leaving Venice only half the crusaders had arrived, and less than half the passage money

had been paid. The crusaders being at the end of their resources, Dandolo offered to cancel the balance of the debt if they would help him to reduce Zara, the capital of Dalmatia, a city lying on the Adriatic and a formidable trade rival. Zara was a Christian city and belonged to the king of Hungary, who was himself a pledged crusader. The proposal was therefore monstrous. The pope denounced it, and many of the crusaders protested. Four hundred and eighty ships, however, sailed from the lagoons with trumpets sounding and priests chanting. Zara soon fell, and such of the inhabitants as were not slain fled, leaving houses and goods. The crusaders wintered at Zara, but some went home in disgust.

During the winter ambassadors came from Philip of Germany offering to the crusaders on behalf of young Alexius two hundred thousand marks of silver, a year's maintenance, and a reinforcement of 10,000 men, if they would place him on the imperial throne. To gratify the pope and satisfy the consciences of such crusaders as had any, Alexius further promised that he would subject the Greek Church to the Roman pontiff. The terms were agreed to by the chiefs, but not divulged to the rank and file, and the combined armament sailed for Corfu.

When the fleet reached Corfu, and all learned their destination, half the army was rebellious. But it was not easy to return now, and Dandolo and Boniface persuaded them to hold together until they had placed young Alexius, who had now joined the expedition, upon the throne, and filled their pockets with Byzantine gold. This done they would all hie away together to the Holy Land. But for the Holy Land Dandolo cared not one whit. Venice was to him all in all. He had used the crusaders in the interests of the republic at Zara, and he would do the same at Byzantium.

On 23rd June the allies arrived within sight of Constanti- 1203.
nople. The city had been badly governed for half a century. The people had lost heart, the emperors depended upon foreign troops, and the fleet had fallen into decay. Scarcely twenty vessels were fit for service.

When the huge crusading armament confronted the city Alexius III. shut his gates and tried negotiation. Assuming that the Holy Land was their goal, he offered to help them thither, but warned them that if they attacked the empire they would be crushed. The Latins replied that they had come to depose a usurper and restore to young Alexius his heritage. It is true that Alexius III. was a usurper; but his brother Isaac had been the same, and Alexius his nephew had no more right to the throne than the others had.

An assault was determined on, and the crusaders, who had massed at Scutari, moved to the European side. The crusaders assaulted the walls on the land side of the city, the Venetians attacked from the sea. The crusaders failed in their operations, but the Venetians made good their footing. That night the emperor Alexius III. fled, and the troops, seeing nothing now to fight for, gave the crusaders their own way, brought Isaac out of prison and set him on the throne. They told the crusaders what they had done and invited them to send in young Alexius to be co-emperor with his father. Before doing this the crusaders sent envoys to Isaac to demand a ratification of their contract with his son. The old man ratified it, but with amazement, declaring that it could not be carried out.

Isaac and his son Alexius IV. did their best to satisfy the demands of the crusaders. The treasury was ransacked, the palace stripped, the monasteries and churches were placed under contribution. But all did not avail. Moreover the crusaders had tasted blood, and regretted that the Greek surrender had robbed them of their chance of storming and plundering the city. Some revenged themselves by attacking and looting the quarter occupied by Moslem traders. When they were driven back they set the houses on fire, and the wind being strong the fire raged until a most valuable quarter of the city was destroyed. The maddened populace fell upon the Latin residents, who fled to the crusading camp for refuge.

1204. These things led to a revolution in the city, the people declaring that they would no longer be governed by men who

had thus sold them to their enemies. Anarchy ensued, Isaac died of fright, Alexius IV. was strangled, and a noble named Alexius Ducas, son-in-law of Alexius III., seized the throne.

Alexius V. (Ducas) threw himself into his hard task with spirit, and strained every nerve to ward off the impending disaster. Had the citizens been whole-hearted they might even yet have resisted successfully. Alexius paid the soldiers, strengthened the fortifications, and compelled the citizens to arm in their own defence.

The crusaders and Venetians prepared for the storming of the city with great deliberation. This time they concentrated their attack on the sea-wall. The first attack was a failure, and some of the crusaders, declaring that Providence was fighting against them, would have retired from the contest. But the Venetians demanded a second assault. Three days, therefore, were spent in resting and repairs, and then the second attack was delivered. This time they were successful. Such fighting men as were left in the city lost heart, and would not face the foe. Alexius V. escaped in the night, and Theodore Lascaris, his general, having first tried to rally the Greeks in vain, also escaped. Resistance was at an end, and Byzantium was passive in the hands of her conquerors.

Though fighting had now ended, the crusaders proceeded to sack the city. Government buildings were guarded, all private property was given up to plunder. The scenes that ensued were beyond description. Outrage, robbery, violence, reigned supreme. The churches were defiled. St. Sophia, then the grandest Christian edifice in the world, was foully desecrated. Its altars were broken to pieces, its hangings were torn down, its sacred chalices were used for drinking cups. Drunken revellers played dice at its tables, and in the patriarch's seat a harlot was enthroned. Coffins were broken open and tombs rifled in search of golden ornaments and gems. Amongst the rest the tomb of Justinian was desecrated, and remains were exposed which had lain for six centuries at rest.

Historic monuments and works of art of priceless value,

the accumulation of a thousand years, were destroyed in a moment. Marble statues were broken, bronzes were melted down for the sake of the copper. The well-known horses on the portico of St. Mark were saved from the general wreck, and remain in Venice, a standing memorial of her unutterable shame.

The priests who accompanied the crusading army were as bad as the rest. Abbots and monks compelled the Greek priests on pain of death to surrender their relics and their treasure. With a strange mixture of blasphemy and folly one German monk boasted that he had thus obtained a piece of the cross, an arm of St. James, and the skeleton of John the Baptist. For some time after the siege there was a market in relics, Western churches eagerly purchasing all that they could get. But when it became evident that the supply was mysteriously keeping pace with the demand, the inquiries ceased.

Language fails to adequately characterise these proceedings. Even Innocent III. was shocked. The pope who could doom the Albigenses to destruction, who had given the crusaders permission to pillage as long as they did it in the fear of God, and who rarely allowed conscience to stand between him and temporal interest, felt that the crusaders had gone too far.

"You have given yourselves up to debauchery in the face of all the world, you have glutted your guilty passions, and you have pillaged in such fashion that the Greek Church, although borne down by persecution, refuses obedience to the Apostolic See, because it sees in the Latins only treason and the works of darkness, and loathes them like dogs."

Often enough we have spoken of Moslem cruelty. But never in the world's history has Saracen, or Seljuk or Ottoman been guilty of greater villainy than was here perpetrated by men in the name of Christ.

"Arise," Innocent had said in the summons which gathered them together, "Arise, ye faithful; arise, gird on the sword

and buckler; arise, and hasten to the help of Jesus Christ. He Himself will lead your banner to victory."

Having ruined Byzantium and divided the spoil, the Latins now proceeded to portion out the empire. Baldwin, count of Flanders, was elected emperor and crowned by the papal legate. Boniface of Montferrat, who had higher claims, was not so popular, and had to content himself with the kingdom of Thessalonica. The Venetians claimed a three-eighths share, and took it out in islands and seaports, thus greatly increasing the wealth and power of their State. The rest of the empire was divided among the minor chiefs, few of whom got, and fewer of whom kept, effective possession of their allotted provinces. Forty thousand men might destroy a city, but they could not govern an empire.

The Latin Empire lasted for fifty-seven years, and, but for the strength of the walls of Constantinople, might not have lasted ten. Baldwin reigned for one year only. He was captured by the Bulgarians and died in prison. His brother Henry succeeded him, and did his best, maintaining a defensive attitude in a gradually narrowing area. Boniface of Montferrat, who with Dandolo must bear most of the infamy, was killed in 1207; Dandolo was already dead.

Alexius V. was captured by the crusaders and thrown from the top of a pillar 150 feet high. Alexius III. had escaped to Iconium. Instead of living a quiet life there he must needs persuade the sultan to attack Theodore Lascaris, who ruled at Nicæa. They were defeated, and Alexius ended his days in confinement.

Theodore Lascaris, who had fought so bravely during the siege, was now the acknowledged leader of the Greeks. He was crowned at Nicæa, and held his own against Latin and Moslem alike. John Ducas, his son-in-law, succeeded him, an excellent sovereign. He crossed to Europe and drove the Franks out of Southern Thrace, and afterwards actually laid siege to Constantinople itself. A Venetian fleet came to the rescue, and he had to raise the siege.

1206.

1230.

1235.

1254. Theodore II. succeeded to Ducas and did well, but died in four years. His son was an infant, so Michael Paleologus ascended the throne.

Meanwhile the Latin power in Constantinople had steadily waned. At last Baldwin II. travelled like a mendicant over Europe trying to raise money in order to stave off his doom. He was not without genius, for he got a large sum of money from Louis IX. of France, commonly called "St. Louis," for relics which included Moses's rod, the jaw-bone of John the Baptist, and the crown of thorns. How Baldwin arranged matters with the monk who had already interned John the Baptist's skeleton in Germany is not recorded.

1261. Such was Baldwin's poverty that he sold the lead off his palace roof for cash, and deposited his son and heir with his bankers as collateral security. At length the end came. Whilst the Venetian fleet which protected Constantinople was absent on a marauding expedition in the Black Sea, a sudden and unpremeditated attack was made upon the city, the gates were opened by friendly hands, and the Latin Empire was at an end.

The Latins and Venetians had conjointly wrought terrible evil. Even now we eat the bitter fruit of the tree which they planted. For centuries the Greeks had guarded the road to Europe against the Moslem, wearing out generation after generation of invaders. Now all was changed. The empire was torn to pieces, and though Byzantium lasted yet for two centuries she never again held her own. The Moslems increased in strength continually until Byzantium fell before them, and Vienna with difficulty barred their path. The crusading tragedy, in which the Fourth was so truly lamentable an Act, handed over South-Eastern Europe to six centuries of Turkish despotism.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH CRUSADES.

THE fact that Constantinople was for a time in the hands of the Frank did nothing to help the Syrian Christians. But they had rest from another cause. We have spoken of a terrible famine and plague which visited Egypt. During the 1200.
time of that visitation so many died that the sultan of Egypt had neither strength nor inclination for aggressive war. Moreover, the plague spread to Syria, and there was much suffering there. Terrific earthquakes also visited the East, and enormous damage was done at Acre, Tyre, Tripoli and Damascus. The walls of Acre were thrown down, and had to be rebuilt by subscription.

Henry, count of Champagne, whom Richard I. of England had left titular king of Jerusalem, was killed in 1197. His widow, Isabella, through whom he had his claim to the title, died 1205, and the title descended to Mary, daughter of Isabella by her former husband, Conrad of Montferrat and Tyre.

Philip II. of France was asked to choose a suitable husband for Mary, and selected John de Brienne, a brave knight of no very exalted origin, who set out for Palestine accordingly. He reached Acre safely, was married to the queen, and crowned 1210.
with her at Tyre.

John de Brienne had only brought a retinue of a few hundred knights, and found himself so surrounded by difficulties that he appealed to pope Innocent III. for another crusading army. Innocent was willing, but the time was not propitious, and he got little response to his appeal. France and England were at war, in Germany rival emperors con-

tended for the mastery, and the Albigensian persecution had plunged Southern France into the deepest gloom.

1212. About this time the children's crusades took place. They afford a sad indication of the evil spirit abroad among the people. To-day the minds of our young are poisoned by vicious tales, in those days they were inflamed by accounts, only too true, of the crusades carried on amongst the so-called enemies of the faith. In their very sports boys played at burning heretics and cutting Moslem throats. Unscrupulous persons made a gain of the passions thus excited, and the fever spread. Numberless boys and girls ran away from home, and scoundrels both male and female encouraged them, and tramped with them from town to town, emptying the pockets of the charitable, and disappearing when trouble came. Some children got as far as the coast ports, begging their way. Each boy would be a David, each girl a Deborah, and the Mediterranean would dry up at their approach. The Mediterranean did not dry up, but they were lured on board vessels and consigned to the African slave markets.

1216. No properly organised crusade had started in answer to pope Innocent III.'s appeal at the time of his death, though John of England, Frederick II. of Germany, and Andrew II. of Hungary, had each assumed the cross at his request. John died, Frederick delayed, and the king of Hungary was the only reigning sovereign who embarked on the fifth crusade. With him went the dukes of Bavaria and Austria, also forces

1217. from Italy, France, and some islands of the Mediterranean.

A considerable army gathered at Acre, and had the Saracens given battle at once all would have been well. But Malek-Ahdel had learned from experience wherein the chief weakness of the crusaders lay, and advised his people to let them alone. He knew that dissension would soon work more ruin amongst them than the enemy's sword. The event showed that he had rightly judged. The camp of idle men was soon a den of discord and debauchery, and when the leaders, to keep their men out of mischief, attacked a fort on

Mount Tabor, they were repulsed. Recrimination followed, and some of the leaders went home in disgust. Amongst these was the king of Hungary. He did not return empty-handed, however, for he took with him relics, purporting to be the hand of St. Thomas, the head of St. Peter, and one of the water-jars used at Cana of Galilee. 1218.

Other crusaders arriving, John de Brienne persuaded the army to invade Egypt. Accordingly they set sail and reached Damietta safely. They besieged the city, and after much toil captured an important fort. But the siege was tedious, and many crusaders went home. Others arrived, including cardinal Pelagius, the papal legate, an arrogant man who did much mischief.

Malek-Kamel, the sultan of Cairo, offered to surrender Jerusalem to the crusaders if they would depart from Damietta and make peace. The military men would have agreed gladly, for the acquisition of Jerusalem was the main purpose of the crusade, but the papal legate refused to sanction the agreement. At last Damietta was taken by storm. The on- 1219.
slaught was unopposed, and when they entered the city the crusaders found that of 70,000 inhabitants but 3,000 remained alive.

The Moslems now enlarged their conditions of peace, offering not only Jerusalem but the Holy Land in exchange for Damietta, and again the military men would have made peace. But again the arrogant prelate refused to sanction a treaty and demanded that the hosts should march on Cairo, the capital of Egypt. After long delays, waiting for reinforcements that did not come, they marched. Ignorant of the nature of the country 1221.
they soon got into difficulties. The Nile rose, the Egyptians broke down the sluices, and the crusaders were caught like fish in a net. There was no escape for them, and now the cardinal who had refused such favourable conditions of peace begged for peace at any price, offering to yield up everything if only their lives might be spared. The sultan of Cairo, though he could easily have allowed the host to perish to the

last man, granted peace, provisioned the famished soldiers, and sent his son to lead them in safety from the land which they had come to destroy. Thus ended the fifth crusade.

Frederick II. of Germany was the hero of the sixth crusade. He was grandson of Barbarossa, and son of Henry VI. and his wife Constance, heiress to the Sicilian throne. After Tancred's death Henry VI. assumed the Sicilian crown, and had widespread dominions, Sicily, Italy and Germany being under his rule. Frederick was born at Palermo the year of his father's coronation, and the next year Henry VI. returned to Germany, leaving Constance as regent. The high-handed conduct of his officials caused revolt, and we have seen in a former chapter how Henry, after setting two crusading armies in motion, led a third to Sicily to crush the rebellion. When he had effected this he sent the troops on to the East to join the others, and was him-
1198. self about to follow them when he died.

Constance died the year after her husband, and their child Frederick was left to the guardianship of Innocent III., who was elected pope just at that time. Innocent was a faithful guardian, and Frederick grew up a highly cultured man, perhaps the ablest man of his day.

Frederick had been crowned king of Sicily in his fourth year, and in his eighteenth he entered into competition with Otto for the crown of Germany. Otto's power was shattered at the Battle of Bouvines, and he retired from the contest, so
1215. that Frederick found himself at the age of twenty-one emperor without a rival. The influence of Innocent III. had been most valuable to him in connection with this matter, and in return for it Frederick had promised to lead a crusade.

Frederick had been born and reared in Sicily, and there was more of the Italian than the Teuton in his disposition. In Sicily he ruled over men of varied creed, and had grown up broad-minded and tolerant. He was an excellent linguist, versed in literature, a mathematician, fond of natural history, an excellent sportsman and an abstemious man. He had no love for war; he preferred diplomacy and statesmanship. He

had Moslems amongst his Sicilian subjects, and they were loyal to him and spread his fame abroad. His reputation for fairness reached Egypt and Syria and helped him greatly in his negotiations with the Saracens. 1220.

When Frederick was twenty-six years of age pope Honorius III. crowned him emperor. In return he made many concessions to the clergy, and renewed his crusading vow. Frederick intended to carry out his promise loyally, but at his own time and in his own way. He knew the follies that had been committed by former crusaders, and had no intention of imitating their example. He therefore refused to join the expedition already described, in which John de Brienne and cardinal Pelagius brought a fine army to such unutterable grief. Honorius was exasperated, and when Damietta was lost he upbraided Frederick. But they became reconciled, and Frederick's departure was postponed by agreement. 1225.

Frederick contracted a second marriage with Isabella, daughter of John de Brienne, heiress, since the death of Mary her mother, of the kingdom of Jerusalem. This match gave him a new and personal motive for undertaking the crusade.

Honorius died and was succeeded by Gregory IX., an aged, 1227.
obstinate man, who by his treatment of Frederick and his foolish belief that his own obstinacy and divine authority were synonymous did much mischief.

On the day of his accession Gregory IX. issued a proclamation to the Western sovereigns requesting them to join in a crusade, and he threatened Frederick with ecclesiastical vengeance if he did not at once get ready. Frederick was willing to go to Palestine, but had no desire to ravage Moslem lands unnecessarily, or to wade to Jerusalem through seas of blood. He had many Moslem acquaintances, he understood Arabic, he had corresponded for some time with Malek-Kamel, who was now sultan of Egypt, and had found him courteous and reasonable. He hoped to obtain by treaty more than could be obtained by war. He believed that the sultan could be persuaded to recognise his kingship of Jerusalem, and to

grant substantial advantages to the Christians without bloodshed. This was common sense, but it was neither the popular nor the papal idea of what a crusade should be. If plunder, outrage, and murder, were eliminated from crusading it would cease to attract, and where would be the short cuts to Heaven which had been dangled before the imagination of Europe for a century.

During the summer a crusading army, containing German, Italian, French, and even English warriors, attracted by the expectation of Frederick's leadership, assembled near Brindisi. But the season was intensely hot; fever broke out, and thousands died. Amongst the victims was the commander of Frederick's army. Frederick did actually sail, but, finding himself ill, put in at Otranto, and the expedition broke up. Gregory was furious. He could not deny the fever, for bishops had died, but he held Frederick responsible for it, though on what pretext it is hard to say. Accordingly he excommunicated Frederick, and laid every place where he might chance to be under interdict.

Frederick replied to the papal fulminations with dignity, and appealed to the sense of justice of his fellow-sovereigns, declaring that the papacy was swollen with avarice and pride, that its demands were insatiable, and that it presumed to deal with emperors, kings, and princes as if they were tributaries. Frederick was popular, the papal emissaries failed to turn his
1228. subjects either in Italy or Germany from their allegiance, and there was such a tumult in Rome itself that Gregory had to fly.

The pope now forbade Frederick to go to the Holy Land at all, but he disregarded the prohibition, and went on with his preparations. When he had sailed and reached Acre in safety, he found that papal messengers had preceded him, carrying the interdict, and commanding the faithful to stand aloof. The patriarch of Jerusalem and the leaders of the Hospitallers and Templars obeyed the pope, but Hermann of Salza, grand master of the Teutonic knights, and many others, disregarded the papal injunction and supported Frederick.

Realising how absurd it was to use brute force where negotiation was possible, the emperor corresponded with the sultan of Egypt, and at length concluded a treaty for ten 1229.
years, in which his sovereignty in Jerusalem was recognised, and by which Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem, and other places were restored to the Christians. In Jerusalem the Saracens only retained the use of the Mosque of Omar for their worship.

"Thus in a few days," wrote Frederick to the king of England, "by a miracle rather than by strength, that business hath been brought to a conclusion which for a length of time past many chiefs and rulers of the world, among the multitude of nations, have never been able till now to accomplish by force, however great, nor by fear."

Frederick next proceeded to Jerusalem to be crowned. The interdict had preceded him, and no priest would assist in the ceremony, so the emperor took himself the crown from the altar, and placed it on his own head. Hermann of Salza read a statement in which Frederick defined his position, and generously excused the action of the pope on the ground of ignorance of the facts. The emperor then showed his broad-minded spirit by visiting the Mosque of Omar. All this was gall itself to the pope, whose fury could not be controlled.

The emperor returned to Europe, having won golden opinions from the Saracens, and Hermann of Salza declared that he could have obtained more important concessions had the clergy supported him. He had been thrice excommunicated with bell, book, and candle, yet had done more for the Christians than any other crusader, and had done it without the shedding of blood. Pope Gregory, however, repudiated the treaty, declaring it to be a monstrous attempt to reconcile Christ and Belial.

During Frederick's absence, John de Brienne, Frederick's father-in-law, who had quarrelled with him as soon as he claimed sovereignty in Palestine, was employed by the pope to devastate his dominions in Naples. But on the emperor's re-

turn the papal troops were quickly driven over the frontier and the papal dominions themselves were threatened. Seeing this the pope now begged for peace, and the treaty of San
1230. Germano was the result.

The peace between Frederick and the sultan was not well observed by either Christian or Moslem. Many on both sides rejoiced in war and were eager for plunder. Such looked upon peace as a calamity. Had Frederick dwelt permanently in Palestine he would have worked wonders, but a non-resident sovereign had little influence. Collisions occurred between Moslems and Christians, and pilgrims were often in bodily fear. Complaints reached Europe, and the pope and emperor, reconciled for the time, proclaimed another crusade. The sultan hearing of the preparations for war drove the Latins from Jerusalem, and the treaty was at an end.

Several nobles, chiefly French, responded to the papal proclamation. But when they met at Lyons to arrange their plans Gregory had again picked a quarrel with the emperor and had changed his mind about the crusade. The pope accordingly ordered the crusaders to go home, but they refused to obey, nor would they listen to Frederick when he also advised postponement. When they pleaded their vows, pope Gregory offered to relieve them from these, on condition that they paid into the papal treasury the sum it would cost them to go to the Holy Land. It is not wonderful that this proposition caused great scandal among the people.

1239. The crusaders would not be diverted from their purpose, so they set sail and arrived safely at Acre. Next year they were joined by Richard of Cornwall with an English band. He also sailed notwithstanding papal prohibition. The united bands raided Turkish territory and did much mischief. Fortunately for them the sultans of Egypt and Damascus were at war, so the sultan of Egypt renewed the treaty which had been made with Frederick and gave the crusaders an excuse for returning home.

Hardly was Jerusalem again in the hands of the Latins

than it was again lost, and in a strange way. For some time the Tartars had been pouring desolation over the world. Eastward to China, westward to the Baltic, southward to the Persian Gulf the hosts of Genghis Khan had spread. Russia, Poland and Hungary had been overrun. Even in England such terror was caused by a rumoured invasion that the east coast fishermen feared to put to sea.

The Charismians, Turks dwelling south of the Sea of Aral, only one degree less ferocious than their pursuers, had been driven from their habitations by these marauders, and had made themselves new settlements in the Euphrates Valley. Many became mercenaries, selling their services to the highest bidder.

The sultan of Egypt, pressed hard by his enemies in Damascus and Syria, made alliance with the Charismians. As 10,000 or 20,000 of them were galloping south to join his standard, they suddenly found themselves close to Jerusalem. Eager for booty they fell upon the city at once, and so unexpectedly that no resistance could be made. Such of the inhabitants as had the chance of flying fled, those who remained were massacred. With a refinement of cruelty which it would be hard to parallel, they then displayed Christian banners on the walls and rang the bells of the churches to intimate to those who had fled that they might return in safety. When they did return they also were foully murdered. Thirty thousand are said to have perished. Not only was the city sacked, but the very tombs were rifled by these savages. The contents of the tombs of the Latin kings of Jerusalem from the days of Godfrey were burned.

Christians and Moslems alike united against this brutal foe, and an army was gathered at Ascalon. The Saracens, who best understood the nature of an enemy of this sort, counselled a Fabian policy, arguing that if the Charismians were left alone their forces would melt away through the eagerness of each man to make sure of the booty he had acquired. But the Christians would not wait, and the foe was thereupon attacked

1244. at Gaza. A terrible battle was fought. It lasted [illegible] the carnage was fearful, and the crusading forces [illegible] lated.

The Christians never again held their own [illegible] They now possessed only one or two seaports. The Latin kingdom in Palestine was at an end.

The Charismians reaped no benefit from their [illegible] They quarrelled with the sultan of Cairo, enemies arose against them on many sides, and soon they disappeared altogether from history.

CHAPTER VII.

THE END OF CRUSADING.

THERE was a time when the fall of Jerusalem would have caused much excitement in Europe. But that day had gone by. Pope Innocent IV. advocated a new crusade, and demanded funds from the faithful. But the papal voice had ceased to charm. Frederick, who was in any case an excommunicated man, was busy defending his empire against the Tartars. Italy was distracted by feuds between Guelph and Ghibelline; Spain had Saracens at her own doors; England was at war with Scotland and Wales, and her barons and priests were losing no opportunity of remonstrating against papal rapacity, and protesting against further taxes for crusading. 1244.

The only sovereign who responded to the papal appeal was Louis IX. of France. Louis was a good man and highly esteemed, religious, ascetic, brave. If self-devotion alone could have qualified a man to lead a crusading army, Louis could have led it well. But more than that was needed, and his unfitness for the post was apparent to all but himself. Even his bodily constitution unfitted him for the task. He was far from strong. It was in fact when lying at death's door that he vowed that, should his life be spared, he would undertake a crusade. His relatives and councillors, even the prelates themselves, tried to dissuade him from the enterprise. But all did not avail. Mistaking obstinacy for conscientiousness, Louis persisted in going to the war, and, when his people saw that he could not be dissuaded, they supported him loyally both with money and with men.

The expedition assembled at Aigues Mortes, a town on the Mediterranean, near the mouth of the Rhone, and when all 1248.

was ready Louis sailed, leaving his mother, Blan[illegible] to act as regent. Marguerite, his queen, and [illegible] Charles of Anjou and Robert of Artois, with th[illegible] accompanied him.

They wintered at Cyprus, then ruled by Henr[illegible] and there Prince de Joinville, the famous French [illegible] whom we are indebted for a biography of Loui[illegible] personal service.

The wintering at Cyprus did the army no good. [illegible] relaxation of discipline, and immorality and pesti[illegible] During the winter the grand masters of the Templ[illegible] pitallers came across from Palestine, and expressed [illegible] that good terms could be obtained from the Sarac[illegible] tiation with the sultan, and begged that the king [illegible] this before proceeding to war. But Louis looke[illegible] suggestion as casting a slur on his military prowe[illegible] some way derogatory to his vow, so he persisted in [illegible]

During residence in Cyprus it was arranged [illegible] tination of the expedition should be changed, an[illegible] should proceed in the first instance to Egypt. [illegible] mistake. Egypt was now in a healthy condition, [illegible] strong ruler. The expedition had been well adv[illegible] the delay in Cyprus had enabled the sultan to prep[illegible] army and fleet to meet the enemy.

1249. The crusaders sailed in the spring; a well-equipped [illegible] of 800 vessels. The fleet was scattered by a storm, [illegible] had to return to Cyprus with the loss of half his [illegible] A second attempt was made, and Damietta was [illegible] safety with an armament somewhat reduced but [illegible] able. The landing was opposed, but the crusaders [illegible] great determination, and the Egyptians retired. [illegible] Damietta was set on fire by the Moslems and aban[illegible] the crusaders entered without striking a blow.

Had the crusaders advanced upon Cairo in the [illegible] of victory all might have been well. Had they [illegible] Damietta, and proceeded to capture other Egypti[illegible]

things might have been still better. Instead, they lingered at Damietta for six months, spending the time in forays, feasting and debauchery. When at last they set out, they found that the Moslems had not been idle. The sultan had gathered his forces from every quarter, and a huge army lay at Mansurah, strongly entrenched.

When the crusaders approached Mansurah they found their advance checked by a deep and broad canal. Showing a strange lack of engineering skill, they lay supine for two months, whilst hostile forces assailed them with discharges of arrows and stones and Greek fire.

At length a Bedouin revealed a ford not far distant, and the crusaders prepared to cross. In the early morning their vanguard dashed to the other side and put a troop of Moslems to flight. They had done well, but their folly spoiled all. Instead of waiting to protect the passage of the main body, the knights who formed the vanguard chased the flying Moslems, and dashed after them into Mansurah. They had rushed blindly into a trap. No sooner were they within the walls than Bibars, the Moslem commander, shut the gates and rallied his flying forces. Street fighting ensued, from the roofs of the houses missiles were thrown, and in a few hours 1,500 crusaders, the flower of the army, were destroyed. Worse followed. Profiting quickly by the terrible blunder of the vanguard, the Moslem forces gathered on the bank of the canal and attacked each detachment as it crossed. Unaware for some time that they were without the protection of their vanguard, they were thrown into confusion, and only the fiercest heroism saved the army from annihilation.

Three days later Bibars again appeared in force and another terrific battle was fought. The French held their own, but their army was so reduced that further advance was manifestly impossible. Instant retreat to Damietta would have saved the remnant, for the city was well garrisoned and could have given them effective shelter. But there was no wisdom in that camp. The leaders determined to hold their ground and clung to a

place where the very river was putrid with the [illegible] slain. Meanwhile the Moslems gathered round [illegible] carrion. Soon disease and famine made the choic[illegible] retreat and death, and the remnant of the host [illegible] misery of the retreat baffles description. Orga[illegible] was out of the question, the Moslems worked the[ir will] king and nobles were captured, the rank and file [chose] Islam and death. Not one man would have left [Egypt] but that some Moslems, wiser and more merciful [than] others, reminded them that dead men paid no ransom.

After lingering in prison for a time Louis was released on promise of payment of a huge ransom and the surrender of Damietta. A ten years' truce was also concluded between the Christian powers represented by the king of France and the Moslem princes of Egypt and Syria.

Louis now sailed for Acre with the remnant of his host. Though his mother the regent, and the ministers who represented him in France begged him to return at once the letter of humiliation was so great that he postponed his departure as long as he could. For nearly four years he remained in the Holy Land trying to do some good by restoring the fortifications of such seaports as were still in Christian hands, and making a few pilgrimages. He refused to visit Jerusalem though offered a safe conduct by the sultan.

Louis' residence in the Holy Land was the more tolerable as the sultans of Egypt and Damascus were at war and each was eager to conciliate Louis, hoping to obtain his aid against the other.

The death of Blanche of Castile at length made Louis' return to France imperative, and he set sail. Fourteen vessels served to convey such forces as remained; he had left Cyprus with 800. The character of the king may be gathered from the fact that each of the ships had an altar for hourly prayer during the voyage. The fleet had a stormy passage, but at last reached France, and Louis made his public entry into Paris
1254. after an absence of no less than six years.

After the departure of Louis from Palestine there was fierce dissension among the Christians. The Venetians and Genoese fought a great naval battle off Acre, and the Genoese were so severely beaten that they abandoned the city and established themselves at Tyre. The Templars and Hospitallers fought a pitched battle, and scarcely a Templar in Acre escaped alive. But for their dread of the Tartars who were still pressing on from the East, the Moslems could easily have driven the Franks from Palestine altogether. But it was not a time for fresh conquest when their very existence was in danger.

When the Tartars had overthrown the caliphate of Bagdad and were marching through Syria towards Egypt, the Mamelukes, the bodyguard of the sultan of Cairo since the days of Saladin, deposed the sultan and put Koutouz their own leader in his place. Koutouz met the Tartars at Tiberias and defeated them. But when he returned to Egypt he was assassinated, and Bibars, the general who had so triumphed at Mansurah, ascended the throne in his stead.

Bibars, the true founder of Mameluke rule in Egypt, was the most formidable foe the Latins had encountered since Saladin. He attacked the Latin kingdom in Syria with indomitable energy. The land was ravaged, Nazareth, Cæsarea and Arsulf were captured and the great fortress of Safed fell. Not even then could the Franks unite. The Genoese were actually attacking Acre from the sea, whilst Bibars was devas- 1268.
tating the surrounding territory on the shore.

In a short time Jaffa was captured and then Antioch fell. At the fall of this important capital 17,000 of the inhabitants were massacred and upwards of 100,000 were sold into slavery. These disasters were fatal to the Christian power and brought the northern crusading State to an end. In the southern State, Acre and Tripoli were the only places of importance holding out against the Moslems.

The end of the Christian power in Syria was manifestly drawing nigh. Gregory X. preached a crusade throughout all Europe, but there was little response. One heart was, however,

still faithful, Louis, undeterred by former failure, a
of a wasting disease with which he was afflicted, a
mined to try his fortune, turning a deaf ear to
and showing that he had learned little from experi
perate though the enterprise was felt to be, there
who were ashamed to decline to go where the king
numerous body of princes and nobles undertook to j
pedition. Three of his sons assumed the cross, and
Charles of Anjou, who now ruled the Sicilies, and h
Edward, crown prince of England, undertook to join

Louis spent three years in preparing the shee
slaughter. It was not so easy as in former times. En
crusaders willing to go to the Holy Land at their ow
were no longer forthcoming, and their places had to
by mercenaries. The Prince de Joinville, who had
useful to Louis on his first crusade, this time remained
Indeed he openly opposed the project, declaring that
duty was at home, and that those who counselled hi
enterprise did great evil and sinned mortally. But L
not a man likely to be led by others in such matters.
less he was his own chief councillor.

1270. The new expedition sailed like the former from
Mortes, and after a severe storm gained the Bay of Ca
Sardinia. At Cagliari it was resolved to divert the
the expedition to Tunis. The reason is not positively
Some say the Bey of Tunis wanted to become a Chris
this would seem a poor reason for sending a warlik
tion against him. Others say that Charles of Anj
brother, who ruled in Sicily, feared an attack from T
wished to break its power, perhaps annex its territory
more probable. All are, however, agreed that Tunis,
of innumerable pirates and a perfect treasure-house o
would have been a fine city to sack. Whatever may
the reason, the diversion was fatal to the enterprise.
pedition reached Africa in safety, and the army di
without opposition and encamped on the site of an

thage. The ignorance of the troops and the climate of Africa did the rest. Pestilence smote the army in the usual fashion, and men died faster than they could be buried. Jean Tristan, the king's son, fell a victim to the plague, and many nobles with him. Then Louis himself died.

Philip III., the king's oldest son, succeeded to the royal title. Charles of Anjou, who had been delayed, landed at Carthage almost at the moment of the king's death. He took in hand further operations, and there was an improvement in the condition of affairs. The war went on for two months, and the French were successful in several engagements. Then they made terms with the king of Tunis, and set out for Europe. The fleet was to gather at Trapani in Sicily, but a storm scattered them, many ships were destroyed, the rest sailed for home. To salve their consciences the crusaders vowed to meet again in three years. But the vow was not kept. Europe never again went forth in arms to wrest the holy places from the Moslem.

Philip's return to France was sad enough, for he brought with him in mournful procession the remains of no less than five members of the royal house.

Shortly after Louis' death prince Edward of England arrived at Tunis with a small following. He returned to Sicily with the others and wintered there; then, finding that he could not persuade any French princes to accompany him, he set out with his own company to the Holy Land. He distinguished himself by the capture of Nazareth and some other exploits, but achieved nothing of permanent importance. He only narrowly escaped assassination by a poisoned dagger, and when his wounds were healed he made a ten years' truce with the 1272.
Moslems and returned home.

After the termination of the treaty with Edward, the Christian power in Syria quickly collapsed. Gregory X. preached yet another crusade, but the appeal fell on deaf ears. Bibars died but his successors had an easy task. The smaller towns fell, and then the rich and important city of Tripoli. As

1289. the circle narrowed such Christians as escaped wit
took refuge in Acre, which speedily becam thro
most cosmopolitan population. Of unity there
Every nation and society had its commune, there
teen independent authorities within the city.
and religion were set at nought. It seemed as
dregs of humanity had gathered there.

Pope Nicolas IV. sent 1,700 mercenaries to help
the devoted city. They were men of a reckles
only such could be persuaded to undertake the ta
pay fell into arrears, so they took to plundering.
their victims were Saracen merchants, who were
1291. trading in Acre under cover of truce. The sultan
manded redress, and when it was refused he laid si
city.

Having still command of the sea, the citizens n
unity and courage have defended Acre for a long t
as things were, the task was hopeless. Many, recogn
took flight at once. Others fought for a time and
When all had left who could find means for depart
the stronghold of the Franks in Palestine for a ce
back into Moslem hands. Sixty thousand inhabit
still remained were either slain or carried into slav
Templars showed desperate courage. Along with s
who had taken refuge in their great house they
the last. At length their fortress was undermined,
together with numbers of their enemies, they peri
ruins.

Syria was now entirely in Moslem hands. Th
more crusades, though the popes of the thirteenth an
centuries on various occasions attempted to call
arms. But two centuries of terrible failure had
people wisdom, and they had lost faith in crusades.
the lesson had not been learned until untold treas
squandered, and millions of lives had been thrown

THE CRUSADES
ENGLAND
FLANDERS
BRITTANY
CASCONY
SPAIN
POLAND
BOHEMIA
BAVARIA
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
CROATIA
SERVIA
BULGARIA
BYZANTINE
EMPIRE
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
ARMENIA
MOSLEM
TERRITORY
ARABIA

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE.

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUCCESSORS OF JUSTINIAN.

In dealing with the history of the Roman Empire we come to a time when for the sake of clearness it is desirable that we should divide the subject into sections and deal with each section by itself. Britain, Spain, Gaul, Germany, have now for sometime been living their own lives and the individual history of each has become an interesting subject for study, and the time has come when we must go a stage farther, and separate the history of Italy from that of Byzantium. There is no precise moment of cleavage; it must be fixed arbitrarily. But the end of Justinian's reign will be found convenient for our purpose. Justinian made frantic efforts to reunite the Eastern and Western Empires under the Byzantine crown. He failed, and after his death they stood permanently apart. We shall, therefore, now deal with Byzantium as an independent State, never forgetting, however, the great empire from which it sprang. To save confusion we shall also give continuous numbers to monarchs of the same name.

JUSTIN II.—Justinian died after a reign of thirty-eight 565.
years. The empress Theodora had died seventeen years before. They left no issue, but Justinian had indicated his desire that his nephew Justinus, mayor of the palace, who was married to Sophia, a niece of Theodora, should succeed him. Accordingly Justin and his wife proceeded to St. Sophia and made a declaration of the orthodox faith, after which they re-

turned to the palace, where Justin was elevated on the shield and crowned.

The new emperor made many fair promises, and doubtless meant to keep them. But Justinian had left him a hard task. By aggressive warfare the old emperor had extended his frontiers beyond anything that could possibly be maintained. Before his death the impossibility of the position had become clear. The people were impoverished; the armies were sinking in numbers and efficiency; the new frontiers were more than they could guard; huge tracts of country lay depopulated; and enemies were only prevented from invading Roman territory by the payment of annual subsidies. Justinian had galvanised the empire into unnatural energy, it was now paying for that energy by exhaustion.

566. Scarcely was Justin crowned when he had to give audience to envoys from the Avars, a Tartar tribe dwelling on the north bank of the Danube. This people, who were akin to the Huns, had appeared on the frontier in the end of Justinian's reign, and he had subsidised them on condition that they should ward off other troublesome neighbours. Justin refused to continue the subsidies. The refusal may have been brave, and in a sense justifiable, but it was impolitic. In the condition in which the empire then was it was better to have peace almost at any price. The emperor's refusal was the signal for a long and disastrous war, and for much ruinous depredation.

Up to this time the Avars had not been a race of any great importance, but they now gained power and territory in an
567. unexpected way. Alboin, king of the Lombards, proposed to Baian, king of the Avars, that they should unite for the sake of destroying the Gepidæ, a Gothic tribe on the Middle Danube. They united and the Gepidæ were exterminated. Alboin and his Lombard followers now determined to invade Italy, so they departed, leaving their own lands and the ill-gotten lands of the Gepidæ in the possession of the Avars, who soon became a formidable power.

568. War and pestilence had left Northern Italy desolate and

almost uninhabited. "The land had," we are told, "sunk into primæval silence and solitude." The imperial troops held a few strong places, but beyond these the country was undefended. The Goths had gone and now the Lombards came.

The Lombards were the least civilised of the Teutonic tribes. They were still heathen, and had little culture. Narses had employed 5,000 of their warriors to help him against Totila, and they had much to do with the victory at Taginæ. During this campaign the Lombards saw how fair and how defenceless were the plains of Italy. But their king was old and they waited fifteen years before they turned their knowledge to account.

The whole Lombard nation, men, women, children, slaves and cattle, now crossed the Alps, descended into the plains of Venetia, and spread themselves over the territory which still bears their name.

Only garrisoned towns offered any resistance to the invaders and in only one of these, Pavia, was the resistance serious. Verona and Milan soon fell, but Pavia held out for three years. Alboin vowed that he would raze it to the ground, but afterwards he changed his mind and, impressed doubtless by the strength of the city, made it his capital.

Alboin was assassinated and succeeded by duke Clepho, 572.
who was assassinated in his turn. After Clepho the Lombards had no king for ten years, and during these kingless years their leaders spread out every one for himself and subdued the land. There were thirty-five independent duchies at one time. Soon, however, the attacks of enemies showed them the necessity for union, and they again elected a king. He had little power, the dukes paid him but nominal homage, though willing to rally round him against a common foe.

The speedy success of the Lombards showed how superficial Justinian's conquest of Italy had been. He had crushed the Ostrogothic kingdom founded by Theodoric, but he had left nothing substantial in its place. There was an imperial governor or exarch in Italy; at first Narses, then Longinus, after

him Smaragdus. But without a sufficient army and without the goodwill of the Italian people, a governor could do little. The Lombards did not conquer all Italy, however. Ravenna, Southern Italy and the duchy of Rome still remained faithful to the emperor. Nevertheless the fact remained that within a quarter of a century from the victories of Narses and the ejection of the Ostrogoths from Italy, two-thirds of the peninsula had been torn from the grasp of the Eastern Empire and was again in the hands of a barbaric race. Unlike most Teutonic tribes, the Lombards were fond of town life, so that their settlement in Italy helped forward the development of the cities.

We have seen how the destruction of the Gepidæ and the emigration of the Lombards left the Avars with greatly extended territories. They now became a formidable power. They could afford to defy the emperor, and from this time forward, during the reign of Justin and in the time of his successors until they themselves were crushed, they were a scourge to the empire, ravaging the country up to the Balkans and desolating the already sorely distressed provinces of Moesia and Illyricum.

The Avars greatly desired to obtain possession of Sirmium, a fortress of much strategic value. As it was strongly garrisoned they did not care to attack it, so they sent an embassy to Justin demanding its surrender, and also claiming payment of the subsidies which Justinian had formerly granted to the Huns whom they had now subdued. Their demands were
570. refused, but when war ensued and Tiberius the Roman general had been defeated, a treaty was entered into and an indemnity paid. The fortress of Sirmium was, however, not handed over.
574. Four years later the Avars again took the field. Again Tiberius was defeated and he had to promise an annual payment in order to obtain peace.

When Justin had reigned about nine years he became insane, and had to be placed in confinement. In a lucid interval he appointed Tiberius as his colleague and successor. After

that Tiberius acted as regent until his death. He governed in conjunction with the empress Sophia, and as she was a proud and ambitious woman she kept the power as much as possible in her own hands. This went on for four years, at the end of which time Justin died, and Tiberius became sole ruler.

TIBERIUS II.—During the years of his regency Tiberius had 578.
been greatly troubled by the Persians. It will be remembered that Justinian, some years before he died, entered into a treaty with Chosroes, king of Persia, by which he undertook to pay him an annual subsidy. After Justinian's death Justin refused to continue this payment. In making this refusal he was influenced to some extent by the promises which he received from the Turkish tribes who dwelt north of Persia in the district still known as Turkestan. Their chief Dizabul had quarrelled with Chosroes, and determined to seek alliance with the Roman Empire. Accordingly he sent envoys to Constantinople, pressing Justin to break the treaty with the Persians, and promising that if Justin would attack Persia from the west, the Turks would attack it from the north.

Justin found another excuse for breaking the treaty in the appeal of the Christian population of that part of Armenia which was subject to Persian rule. Thinking that they would be less oppressed under the Byzantines than under the Persians, they appealed to Justin for help in the name of their common religion.

These causes combined led Justin to refuse the stipulated annuity and war followed. The war lasted from 572 to 592 and was at last brought to an end by civil war in Persia. It was quite indecisive; sometimes the Byzantine troops had the upper hand, and sometimes the Persian. In the end the Romans lost no territory, and the amount of ravaging and desolating was about the same on both sides. But the war was terribly costly both in men and money, and it served no useful purpose whatever. The long drain of taxation which had so exhausted the empire during the reign of Justinian

went on during the reign of his nephew, the empire had no rest.

In order that he might the more effectually deal with the Persians, Tiberius entered into a treaty of peace with the Avars, promising the payments which Justin had so indignantly refused. Being thus free from war in the Balkans he concentrated 200,000 men on the Persian frontier, and his troops under Maurice, a distinguished general, won many successes. Chosroes, who was now old, would gladly have made peace, but whilst negotiations were pending he died.
579. His son and successor Hormisdas refused to listen to the proposals which Tiberius had made, and the war dragged on. Maurice continued to be successful, and gained the important
581. victory of Constantia. But this did not end the war, for the Persians, who could carry on the war at less cost than the empire, hoped to win in the end by exhausting its resources.
582. When Tiberius had reigned as sole monarch for four years, he was stricken down by a mortal disease, and it became necessary for him to choose a successor. Following the example of Justin, he chose not a relative, but the man whom he believed the most suitable. His choice fell upon Maurice, who was then commanding the imperial army in Persia.

Maurice returned from Persia to find Tiberius on his deathbed. Tiberius nominated him as his successor and he was accepted gladly by the people. A marriage was arranged between him and Constantia, the younger daughter of the dying emperor. Eight days later Tiberius expired.

Tiberius, though a worthy man in some ways, had proved by no means a good emperor. He had many of the qualities which endeared Titus to the people in former days. He was very open-handed, he remitted taxation, and made many gifts. Not content with giving donatives to the soldiers, and bread to the people, he sent gifts to all and sundry, jurists, physicians, bankers. He did not believe in hoarding. The consequence of this recklessness was that he soon drained the treasury dry, and bequeathed a legacy of debt to his successor.

It was well for the empire that he ruled as independent monarch for but four years.

During the reign of Tiberius an incident occurred which presents his character in a somewhat unpleasing light. He enlisted Goths as auxiliaries, and they very naturally begged that a church should be granted them in order that they might hold religious services in their usual way. Tiberius would have granted their request, but the bare suggestion aroused the fury of the orthodox party in Constantinople, and there were formidable riots. Tiberius yielded to the clamour, and not only refused the church, but authorised a general persecution of Arians, lest the populace might suspect him of being well-inclined towards their doctrines.

CHAPTER II.

MAURICE AND PHOCAS.

582. MAURICE.—Maurice succeeded Tiberius, and reigned for twenty years. He was an able and well-intentioned man; but his reign was not a success. For this he cannot be held altogether responsible. Justinian and Justin II. had left him an encumbered inheritance, an empty treasury and a bankrupt State. Worse still, they had bequeathed a legacy of war. Both on the north and in the east enemies abounded, on the one side the Avars and the Slavs, on the other Persia.

Maurice would gladly have ended the wars, for their expense was great, and so fruitless were they that he had often the greatest difficulty in finding pay for the soldiers. So hard was he driven at times that on more than one occasion he cut down the soldiers' pay even whilst hostilities were in progress. This did not answer: the attempt led to serious trouble and mutiny.

In the last chapter we saw how Chosroes, king of Persia, was on the point of making peace with Tiberius when he died. We saw also how Hormisdas his son would not listen to the terms proposed by Tiberius, but persisted in carrying on the war.

On the whole Maurice was successful in the Persian war. He was fortunate in his generals Heraclius and Philippicus, and won several battles. He would have won more but for the mutinous spirit raised by his well-meant but ill-timed efforts at economy.

At last there was a revolution in Persia. Hormisdas become unpopular; he was deposed and slain, and Varahnes succeeded in his place. Hormisdas had left a son, Chosroes,

and he took refuge in the Byzantine camp. Maurice offered to support him on certain terms, and he agreed. He returned to his country and, backed by the Byzantine troops, soon overthrew Varahnes. Chosroes then ascended the throne and peace ensued. The war had lingered for nearly twenty years, and ended, leaving the possessions of the Byzantine and 592.
Persian Empires just where they had been at the commencement of hostilities.

Whilst the Persian war was in progress the empire had suffered greatly from the incursions of the northern tribes. In order that he might have his hands free for the conflict with Persia, Tiberius had made peace with the Avars, promising substantial payments. But early in the reign of Maurice they resumed their ravages. Perhaps they looked upon the treaty as a personal agreement with Tiberius. Maurice tried to renew the treaty, but their demands were exorbitant, and it was evident that they could no longer be restrained by reasonable concession.

Taking advantage of the absence of the Byzantine forces in the East, the Avars crossed the Danube, and attacked the much-coveted fortress of Singidunum. They captured it, but could not have held it long, for eight years after we find them again laying siege to the city.

Maurice subsidised the Avars in order to keep them at peace, but we soon find them again in the empire, ravaging Thrace. They even besieged the most important of the Thracian cities, and some of them fell. At length they were heavily defeated, and for about a twelvemonth the European 588.
provinces had rest.

The Avars were not the only northern tribes with whom Maurice had to deal. About this time we hear of other tribes becoming a menace to the empire. Of these the most important were the Slavs. The Slavs had been dwelling in Southern Russia, but had moved farther southward to fill up the open spaces left by the Goths and the Lombards when they migrated into Italy.

Some of the Slav tribes were subject to the Avars, some were not. Apparently they crossed the Danube in the first instance to escape from Avar domination. They entered the empire in great numbers, but there would have been room for all had they been content to settle down and till the soil. The districts of the Dobrudscha and the Balkan slopes where they chiefly settled were almost uninhabited, and as settlers the new comers might have prospered well. But the Slavs were in a low state of civilisation, hardly yet accustomed to till the soil. They lived by hunting, fishing, and robbing when they got the chance.

Notwithstanding the peace with Persia, the hands of Maurice were always full, contending with these warlike tribes. They were defeated again and again, but their numbers seemed inexhaustible. When one tribe was exterminated, another crossed the Danube and stepped into its place. John of Ephesus, a chronicler of the period, relates how an accursed people, called the Slavs, overran Greece, Thrace, and the adjacent provinces, plundering and burning. They made themselves masters of the country, and after years had passed were still at their ease, ravaging and taking captive.

Maurice did what he could with an empty exchequer, a mutinous army and a poverty-stricken people. But he had many misfortunes and apparently little tact. Accordingly he became extremely unpopular both with the army and with the people.

599. On one occasion the emperor made a terrible mistake. The Avars had captured 12,000 prisoners and demanded ransom. It is probable that many of the prisoners were mutinous soldiers, practically deserters, and Maurice naturally hesitated about the payment. But the Avars accepted his refusal as final and with horrible brutality massacred them to a man. Maurice could not have anticipated such an end to the negotiation, but he should not have run the risk. His action was most impolitic and won him many enemies.

601. Two years later Maurice made another serious mistake.

The army of the Balkans had just finished a successful campaign against the Slavs and had pursued them across the Danube. They were waiting to be recalled in order that they might go into winter quarters, when news came that they were to stay where they were and spend the winter on the Wallachian plains. The order was issued apparently in the interests of economy, but a more unfortunate order could scarcely have been issued. The soldiers at once mutinied, drove away their generals, and with Phocas, a Thracian centurion, at their head, marched upon Constantinople. They did not intend that Phocas should be emperor, apparently they intended that one of the sons of Maurice should be elevated to the throne in his father's place.

The emperor, finding himself deserted by both soldiers and people, crossed to Chalcedon with his wife and children. He was less unpopular in Asia than in Europe, and hoped that he might have time to gather forces and recover his throne. With this view he sent Theodosius, his eldest son, to Persia to beg help from Chosroes, the young monarch whom he had befriended when he was in somewhat similar trouble.

The army of the revolution entered the capital, and finding that the royal family had fled, they proclaimed Phocas emperor. He was an unsuitable man, but the best they had ready.

Phocas accepted the honour, and to make his position more secure sent officers to Asia to execute Maurice. The unfortunate man was dragged from sanctuary, and after some of his children had been slain before his very eyes he was beheaded. He died with dignity and resignation. It speaks volumes for the innate goodness of his heart that when a faithful nurse concealed the young prince, of whom she had charge, and offered her own child to the executioner's sword, Maurice refused to allow the change to be made. Theodosius was overtaken and slain, and shortly afterwards the empress was also slain, together with the remaining members of the family.

602. PHOCAS.—Phocas reigned for eight years, years of calamity and degradation for the empire. He seems to have been an ignorant and brutal man without redeeming feature. Abroad there was disaster, at home terror.

On hearing of the death of Maurice and the usurpation of Phocas, Chosroes declared war. He professed to avenge the injuries sustained by Maurice, but this was a pretext. Some time before the death of Maurice his attitude towards the empire had been threatening.

At this time the imperial forces in the East were commanded by Narses. He was an eminent general, and had been commissioned formerly by Maurice to reinstate Chosroes upon the Persian throne. Phocas therefore looked upon him with a jealous eye, fearing collusion. There was, however, no fair ground for suspecting the loyalty of Narses, and Phocas would have done better to have made him his friend. But he showed his suspicion so openly that Narses revolted, occupied Edessa, and advised Chosroes to begin the war. Phocas then professed a desire to be reconciled with Narses, and invited him to Constantinople. When he came Phocas ordered him to be arrested and burnt alive. By this brutal deed he deprived himself of the only man who was thoroughly capable of grappling with the Persians.

The army in the East, deprived in this cruel way of its favourite general, now fought in spiritless fashion. Ill supported and badly led it sustained many reverses. Daras was
606. captured by the Persians, they overran Mesopotamia, they
608. ravaged Syria, they laid siege to Antioch. The Byzantine armies offered little resistance; and at last the Persians overrunning Cappadocia, Galatia and Bithynia, penetrated even to Chalcedon and encamped upon ground from which they could view Constantinople itself.

Whilst Asia Minor and Syria were thus in the hands of the enemy, and Phocas needed every friend that he had, he was injudicious enough to stir up persecution against the Jews, on the pretext that they had betrayed certain cities to

the Persians. There may have been reason for the suspicion, for from ancient times the Jews and the Persians had been on friendly terms. But it was not an opportune moment for Phocas to increase the number of his enemies. Asia abounded in Jews, many of whom were in positions of influence, and by persecuting them he only added civil war and anarchy to the other miseries from which the empire was suffering.

Whilst Asia was thus torn asunder, conspiracy was rife in the capital. But if Phocas was weak against the enemies of his country he was clever at crushing his own, and various conspiracies organised in the capital came to nought. At length the disaffected entered into correspondence with the governor of Africa. Africa had been enjoying the blessings of peace, and had therefore prospered. A veteran soldier named Heraclius ruled there. He had been appointed by Maurice, and when his patron was slain he refused to recognise Phocas as emperor.

Certain leading senators of Constantinople, detesting 609.
Phocas and knowing that their own lives were in danger, sent emissaries to Heraclius begging him to seize the supreme power. Heraclius was too old a man to care about attempting such an enterprise on his own account, but he undertook it on behalf of his eldest son, who bore his name. Accordingly he fitted out an excellent fleet, which it was arranged should set out to attack Constantinople, whilst a body of cavalry moved eastward by the coast to invade Egypt.

So well was the secret of this conspiracy kept that the fleet under Heraclius the younger reached the Bosphorus unopposed. Priscus, the commander of the imperial guard, who was privy 610.
to the conspiracy, at once joined Heraclius with his whole regiment. Phocas, deserted by all, tried to escape in a small boat, but was captured and beheaded. His last words showed that he was not without wit. "Is this the way you have governed the empire?" asked Heraclius. "Will you govern it any better?" Phocas replied.

CHAPTER III.

HERACLIUS.

610. WHEN Phocas fell and Heraclius ascended the throne a good man succeeded to a bad. But even a good man could not alter facts. The empire was under a thick cloud. In the North the Avars and Slavs, in the South the Persians made life intolerable for the people. Thrace was seldom free from raiding bands, Syria and Asia Minor were constantly overrun. A Persian army had encamped at Chalcedon and gazed at Constantinople with expectant eyes.

The imperial treasury was empty, the subjects of the empire were ground down by taxation, everywhere there was poverty, disaffection and decay. Nor was Heraclius even sure of his armies. The troops who had accompanied him from Africa could be depended upon, but they were a handful. The others were very inefficient. The soldiers had lost all confidence in themselves and dared not meet their enemies in the open field.

The generals who led the armies were unreliable. Had Heraclius been able to take the field and command the armies in person, all might have been well. But this imperial etiquette forbade. For two centuries, since the days of Theodosius I., no reigning emperor had ever led an army in the field. Heraclius had therefore to delegate his power, and the men to whom he delegated it were always unfortunate when not actively disloyal. Priscus, son-in-law of Phocas, one of those who had invited Heraclius from Africa, disappointed in the amount of his reward, and perhaps thinking how easily he might have secured the purple for himself, was so disloyal that Heraclius had to depose him. Thus the first years of the reign of the

new sovereign promised no more for the empire than the years that had gone before. They were but a prolongation of misery.

In the third year of the reign of Heraclius, the armies of 613.
Chosroes again pushed forward, intent upon bringing Syria and Asia Minor permanently under Persian sway. Damascus was captured, and then Jerusalem fell. The circumstances of 614.
the capture were terrible. At the first appearance of the Persians the inhabitants yielded, and received a garrison. But when Shahr Barz, the victorious general, had retired they rose and slaughtered the soldiers. Upon this Shahr Barz returned and gave Jerusalem up to massacre. Ninety thousand Christians were slain, the city was sacked, and its sacred relics fell into the hands of the fire-worshippers. All Christendom was horrified.

Elated by his success in Syria, Shahr Barz pressed into 616.
Egypt. Egypt had not seen war for centuries, and its people were never warlike at the best of times. Moreover, religious conflict divided the people, and they had never taken kindly to Byzantine rule. The Persians, therefore, found their task easy, and Egypt quickly became a Persian province.

The loss of Egypt affected the empire very seriously. For a long time Egypt had been an important source of revenue to the treasury, and Constantinople depended upon it for its supply of corn. Its alienation caused great alarm.

The easy success of the Persians in Palestine and Egypt was largely attributable to religious differences. In Egypt there was constant friction between the Greek Christians and the Copts; in Palestine there was bitter enmity between Christian and Jew. The Palestinian Jews had been alienated quite recently by persecution. Phocas had compelled many to be baptised. There had been revolts, and Phocas had crushed them unmercifully. But the Jews had their revenge when the squadrons of Chosroes poured over the frontier. They joined the Persian ranks in thousands, and made the task of the invader easy. They hoped once more to possess their Holy City, if not in independence, at least under Persian rule.

Since the days of Cyrus, the Persians had never been so hard upon them as other nations had been.

617. With the empire things went from bad to worse. Once more a Persian army encamped at Chalcedon, and this time it remained, its banners and camp fires a terror to the imperial city. It said something for the popularity of Heraclius that he kept his throne. But so depressed was he that he thought of returning to Carthage and even went so far as to ship his treasures. When the Byzantines heard of his proposed flight they were alarmed, and exacted a solemn oath from him that he would not leave the city.

An embassy was sent to Chosroes asking for peace, and Shahen, who commanded the Persian forces before Chalcedon, accompanied the embassy, hoping to influence his master in favour of peace. He met with a poor recompense: the ambassadors were thrown into prison, and he was flayed alive.

Chosroes replied to the request for peace at his leisure, and in a letter written after the style of that written by Sennacherib to Hezekiah:—

"Chosroes, greatest of the gods, king and master of the whole earth, son of Chosroes the great, to Heraclius his vile and insensate slave.

"You refuse to submit to our rule, and call yourself a king. You scatter our treasures and deceive our servants. With your brigands you incessantly annoy us. Have not I destroyed the Greeks? You say you trust in God. Has he delivered Cæsarea, Jerusalem, Alexandria out of my hand? Have not I subdued land and sea to my laws? Can I not also destroy Constantinople? But come hither with your wife and children, and I will pardon your faults. I will give you lands, vineyards, and olive groves. Deceive not yourself with the hope that Christ can save you, he who could not even save himself from the Jews who crucified him. If you descend to the depths of the sea, I will stretch out my hand and seize you."

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." The proposed flight of the emperor and the

letter of Chosroes created a crisis in Constantinople. A crusade was declared, the Church lent her treasure, thousands of volunteers joined the army, and Heraclius determined to lead 618.
the troops in person, and strike at least one fierce blow for freedom.

Preparations began at once but it was some time before Heraclius could take the field. The Avars, remorseless and eager to snatch every opportunity, once more crossed the Balkans and advanced to the gates of Constantinople. Heraclius offered them almost any terms if they would withdraw beyond the Danube. Their chagan proposed a conference at Heraclea, and when Heraclius agreed he laid an ambush and tried to capture him. Heraclius learned in time, but only escaped by hard riding. His pursuers chased him to the suburbs of Constantinople. Notwithstanding this treachery, the emperor continued to offer terms and eventually a peace was arranged.

Further delays were caused by Persian attacks from Chal- 620.
cedon. Shahr Barz even built a fleet and tried to cross the straits. But his efforts were frustrated.

At last Heraclius was able to take the field. He appointed his son Heraclius Constantinus, a boy of ten, to act as regent, 622.
with Sergius, the patriarch, and Bonus, a patrician, as chief administrators.

The war that followed lasted for six years. During these years Heraclius not only proved himself brave, but also showed himself a consummate master of strategy and leader of men, worthy to be ranked with Hannibal and Julius Cæsar. From the very first he gained complete ascendency over Chosroes and his generals, and beat them at every point.

The emperor's first movement showed how carefully he had planned his campaign. Instead of attacking Shahr Barz at Chalcedon, or sailing down the Black Sea and landing on the Armenian coast, he sailed through the Hellespont, and round Asia Minor to the Bay of Issus. There in a splendidly sheltered and easily defended nook he landed his forces. He was

at once close to the important city of Antioch and in a spot to which his supporters might conveniently rally from various parts of the empire.

When Heraclius had exercised his troops he marched northward into Cappadocia, and thus cut in between Shahr Barz and the Euphrates Valley. The effect was instantaneous. The army which had terrorised Constantinople for five years struck its tents and hastened eastward. Without a battle Heraclius had relieved his capital, and freed Asia Minor from the presence of the enemy. When Shahr Barz approached, the emperor outmanœuvred him and cut his army to pieces. Then he led his forces into winter quarters in Pontus, and returned to Byzantium a hero.

623. Next spring the emperor was again with his troops. Abandoning his communication with the sea, he plunged inland and threatened Persia itself. Chosroes had large forces, but retreated before him as he advanced through Armenia. At Gandzaca Chosroes awaited him with 40,000 men, but on his approach fled to Nineveh. The winter was spent by the imperial forces in Albania, after the emperor had freed 50,000 prisoners, partly from mercy, chiefly perhaps because they would have been hard to feed.

624. Chosroes, now greatly alarmed, concentrated his forces, drawing them in from outlying stations, and thus relieving Syria and Egypt of their presence. When, therefore, spring came Heraclius had to face three great generals: Sarablagas, Shahr Barz and Saes. Sarablagas was overthrown and slain; Saes led his army into districts so difficult that it accomplished nothing; Shahr Barz was defeated and fled for his life. Thus ended a most successful campaign, and Heraclius wintered at Van.

625. Next year the emperor again marched southward. Having recovered the old Roman cities of Amida and Martyropolis, he entered Cilicia. At the Sarus Shahr Barz faced him, but was heavily beaten. He retired with his shattered remnant to Persia, and Heraclius marched through Pontus and wintered on the Black Sea.

That winter Chosroes determined to make a supreme effort. 626.
He sent envoys to the Avars and arranged that they should attack Constantinople from the north, whilst he attacked it from the south. Then he levied two great armies. One under Shahr Barz marched to Chalcedon to co-operate with the Avars, the other under Saes marched against Heraclius.

Heraclius showed no anxiety about his capital. He had perfect confidence in Sergius and Bonus, and when he had sent them instructions and a corps of mail-clad veterans to help in the defence, he calmly awaited the result and proceeded with his own plans.

The emperor divided his forces into two sections. One army he sent southward under Theodore, his brother, to meet Saes; with the rest of his forces he remained in Armenia.

As Chosroes had turned the Avars loose on Thrace, Heraclius retaliated by making alliance with the Khazars, a trans-Caucasian tribe, and 40,000 of their warriors swept Media to the very gates of Ctesiphon. Saes was defeated by Theodore, and rather than face Chosroes he slew himself. Chosroes is said to have flogged his dead body in impotent rage.

At Byzantium all went well. The Avars and Persians arrived simultaneously, and their troops gazed at one another across the Bosphorus. But no junction could be effected between their forces, for the imperial fleet had command of the sea and patrolled it day and night. At last the Avars themselves attacked the city with desperate valour. But the defence was superb, and assault after assault was delivered in vain. Utterly foiled, the chagan withdrew and recrossed the Danube. About the same time the citizens heard of the defeat of the Persian army under Saes.

The attack upon Constantinople having thus miscarried 627.
there was no need for Shahr Barz to remain at Chalcedon. Chosroes accordingly wrote recalling him. But Heraclius had the good fortune to intercept the messenger and a letter was substituted telling him that all was well and bidding him remain where he was. Accordingly Shahr Barz did remain to

the amazement of Chosroes. Enraged he now sent a letter to the second in command, ordering him to slay his general and send his head forthwith. But the letter was handed to Shahr Barz himself, who added to his own name the names of all his leading officers. He then called a council, and with one consent they declared for revolution. Peace was arranged with the imperial administrators, and Shahr Barz sent word to Heraclius that his army would give him no more trouble.

Meanwhile another Persian army led by Rhazates had been destroyed, and Heraclius had no more enemies in the field. His victorious army pressed on to Dastagerd and destroyed its palaces. Chosroes was in full flight. Persia was in revolt, and Heraclius marched northward, encamped at Gandzaca in Northern Media, and waited events.

Siroes, the king's eldest son, joined the revolution; Chosroes was deposed and slain. Shahr Barz had already made peace with the emperor and Siroes gladly did the same. All captives, provinces and treasures that had belonged to the Byzantine Empire were restored, and Heraclius, leaving his brother Theodore to make final arrangements, returned to Constantinople. After six years of unbroken victory he enjoyed a well-deserved
629. triumph. Next year he journeyed to Jerusalem and deposited the sacred relics, which he had recovered, in their resting place in the Holy Sepulchre.

Heraclius had restored the boundary of the empire and permanently broken the Persian power. We cannot pretend to pity the Persian kings, however much we may sympathise with their unfortunate people. They had fought for booty and mere conquest. They took by the sword and they perished by the sword. Siroes reigned for eight months, and then was pushed aside by Shahr Barz. The latter was murdered, and in the space of four years Persia saw nine rulers. At last it fell an easy prey to the Moslem, and Islam became the religion of its people.

When Heraclius returned to his capital his mind must have been easier than it had been for many a day. Not only was

Persia in the dust, but the Avars had been so seriously rebuffed that they were not likely to trouble the empire again for a considerable time. All seemed well. Yet at that very moment a storm was gathering which would engulf Persia and undo in the empire all that Heraclius had so bravely and so patiently done.

In another section of our history we have dealt fully with the history of Mohammed, the prophet of Arabia. Born in Mecca, five years after the death of Justinian, driven from 570.
Mecca to Medina by his fellow townsmen, he had gradually 622.
founded the religion of Islam and become the leader of a numerous sect. As he became powerful his followers took up the sword and converted Arabia by force of arms.

When Heraclius was on his last campaign in Persia he re- 628.
ceived the letter which has been already spoken of in Mohammed's life. Chosroes received a similar letter. Chosroes tore up his copy and threatened terrible things; Heraclius, desiring not to make any fresh enemies for the moment, sent a polite reply.

The year after the Persian war had ended the troops of 629.
Heraclius had been attacked by the followers of Mohammed at Muta on the Dead Sea. The excuse for the conflict was the alleged murder of an envoy, and the Moslems were repulsed with great loss. Before Mohammed died he resolved to avenge this defeat and an expedition had been prepared. Abu Bekr, who succeeded Mohammed, carried out his design; the expedition went forth, ravaged the offending province and returned in triumph.

For a year Abu Bekr had to contend for the existence of Islam in Arabia itself. At length he crushed the rebellion and then made his victory permanent, and won the whole-hearted devotion of the Arab by a masterstroke. Realising that if he would keep the Arabs loyal, he must find scope for their energies, he turned them against the foreign unbeliever and claimed universal empire for Islam.

"Thus, like bloodhounds in the chase, the Arabs were let

loose upon mankind, the world their prey. Maddened by the taste of blood into a wild and irresistible fanaticism, they swept their enemies before them, till in a few short years they had engulfed in common ruin the earliest seats of Christianity and the path of Zoroaster" (Muir, *Life of Mohammed*).

No time could have been more opportune for an attack upon the East. The Byzantine and Persian Empires were alike exhausted. Persia was a prey to revolution: Byzantium, though triumphant, was breathless and faint.

Heraclius when he returned unwisely endeavoured to pay back at once the treasure which the Churches had lent him for the war. Whether that which belonged to the people and had been spent for the common good should have been paid back at all may be a question, but at any rate immediate payment was a fatal error. Provinces already afflicted by war were now driven to despair by taxation.

The Persian war came to a conclusion in 628, war with the Saracens, for by this name the hosts of Islam became best known, began in 633. Abu Bekr made preparations upon a great scale. He determined to attack Persia and the empire at once, and commissioned five armies to offer to the world the Koran, tribute or the sword. Heraclius did not prepare adequately to meet this new danger. Neither he nor any other realised the strength of the enemy.

634. After various battles had been fought and several cities had fallen, Heraclius saw the danger and levied an enormous army. A decisive battle was fought on the Yermuk, east of Tiberias. Both sides fought well and the slaughter was terrible. Had Heraclius been himself present he might have conquered. But he was the victim of dropsy and no longer fit to undergo the fatigue of war. So the Saracens triumphed, and the imperial army, driven over a line of precipices, was almost annihilated.

635. This battle decided the fate of Damascus. Its relief was attempted, but the relieving force was defeated and the city fell.

The sudden unmasking of so terrible a foe and the dramatic change from overwhelming victory to hopeless defeat was more

than could be borne. Heraclius took the field himself and strove in vain to beat back the tide of war. He failed and when city after city fell, and he could do no more, he turned towards his capital. On the way his nerves broke down utterly. So prostrate was he that he dared not enter a ship, and a bridge of boats had to be built, covered with earth and hedged by branches before he could be persuaded to venture across the strait.

Soon Jerusalem fell. Omar was now caliph and he acted 637.
with moderation, leaving to the Christians their holy places on condition that they paid tribute and did not proselytise. A mosque bearing the caliph's name was erected on the site of Solomon's temple.

Heraclius sent his son to make a final effort. But he was 638.
defeated near Emesa and had to retire. Two years later the empire did not possess a single stronghold in Asia south of the Taurus.

No sooner was Syria won than the Saracens fell upon 640.
Egypt. Here they had still less difficulty. The native Copts, a majority of the people, hated the Greeks and made the invaders welcome. Farma, Belbeis, Babylon, Memphis fell, and the Greeks retired fighting on Alexandria. Alexandria held out well and might have been saved had Heraclius lived. But as he was preparing an armament for its relief he died. He- 641.
raclius was sixty-six years of age, and had reigned over thirty years. His remains lay in state for three days, and were then buried near those of Constantine. Thus did the founder of Byzantium repose beside the hero who had saved the city in the hour of her direst need.

After the death of Heraclius the citizens of Alexandria lost heart. Such as had movable property worth saving sailed away, the rest submitted.

CHAPTER IV.

SEVENTY YEARS OF TURMOIL.

641. HERACLIUS had expressed the wish that the empire should after his death be ruled jointly by his two sons, Constantinus and Heracleonas. The former, Constantine III., died within three months, and as he had been a general favourite, the people demanded that his son Constans, a boy of eleven, should be crowned and take his father's place. Both the emperors were children, so Martina, the second wife of Heraclius, acted as regent. This arrangement lasted for one eventful year. During that year Alexandria fell, the Greeks losing with it
642. their last foothold in Egypt. The battle of Nevahend, which decided the fate of Persia, was fought within the same year. At the end of the year Martina and Heracleonas were deposed and banished to the Crimea, and Constans reigned alone.

During the minority of Constans II., the Senate administered the affairs of the empire. In the second year of the reign, an expedition was sent against Alexandria, and it was retaken. But Amr, the Arab governor of Egypt, laid siege to it again, and recaptured it; and this time he massacred many of its inhabitants, and threw down its walls.

643. The Moslems attacked Cyprus, ravaged it and laid it under tribute, but had not a sufficiently powerful fleet to enable them to hold the island permanently. Omar had strenuously opposed the building of a fleet, but when he died Othman, his successor, allowed it to be done. The fleet proved of enormous advantage to the Saracens, and soon gave them command of the Mediterranean.

Gregory, the Byzantine governor of Northern Africa, rebelled and proclaimed himself emperor. The Saracens, taking

advantage of the breach between him and Byzantium, invaded the province, captured Barca and Tripoli, and slew Gregory. They thus gained the eastern end of the African province, but on the death of Gregory, Carthage and Western Africa reverted to their allegiance to Byzantium. The Moslems did not become dominant throughout Africa for half a century.

The Moslem fleet did terrible execution. Aradus, a prosperous mercantile city built on an island, was captured and destroyed. Rhodes was captured and occupied for a time, and the Colossus, which had been thrown down by an earthquake, was sold as old brass to a Jewish trader of Edessa. He broke it up, and carried it away in pieces. It made nine hundred camel loads.

Constans II. proved an able monarch, and fought hard even if unsuccessfully. He tried to recover Alexandria, but 652.
his fleet was defeated with great loss. Three years later Constantinople itself was threatened. Muavia prepared to attack it, and assembled an armament at Tripolis in Phœnicia. Constans went forth against him, and there was a great sea-fight off the coast of Lycia. The emperor fought valiantly, but was defeated, and escaped with bare life. It was a crushing blow, and it seemed as if the Saracens must now carry all before them. But at this crisis Othman was murdered, and a savage 656.
civil war broke out between Muavia, governor of Syria, and Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, governor of Persia, rivals for the caliphate. Having, therefore, his hands full, Muavia gladly entered into a treaty of peace with Constans, and it lasted for five years.

During this breathing space, Constans tried to strengthen 659.
his frontiers. Certain provinces, Spain, Egypt, and Africa, as far as Tripoli, were gone beyond recovery. Northward, the province of Moesia and parts of Thrace and Macedon were in the hands of the Slavs, who had evidently come to stay. Constans recognised these facts, and wisely devoted himself to securing that which was left. He was still supreme in Con-

stantinople and the surrounding districts, in parts of Italy, in Asia Minor, Western Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia.

Taking advantage of the opportunity which followed the death of Othman, Constans made war on the Slavs, and defeated them. But he was content that they should acknowledge his suzerainty, and agree to respect the boundaries of the province; he made no attempt to drive them back across the Danube.

Constans proceeded with the re-organisation of the provincial administration of the empire. Heraclius had begun this work, and it was not completed by Constans, but he advanced it considerably. The empire was divided into military districts called themes. The word signified first a depôt of soldiers, and was then applied to the district protected by the depôt. The divisions varied at different times. The Asiatic themes were the Obsequian, Tharcesian, Cibyraeot, Anatolic, Armeniac, and Bucellarian. The western themes were Thrace, Hellas, Illyricum, Sicily, Africa, and Ravenna.

Anxious to conserve the energies of the empire and save Western Africa and Sicily from the Moslem, Constans resolved to shift the ruling centre at least for a time. Uncertain, perhaps, whether he would fix the centre of government at Rome or Syracuse, he tried to gauge the strength of the Lombards in Southern Italy. Accordingly he sailed to Italy with con-
662. siderable forces, and landed at Taranto. After some minor successes he attacked Benevento, the most southern of the Lombard States. Then, hearing that the Lombards were mobilising against him, he left Benevento and marched towards Rome, which was still an imperial city.

663. The Romans received the emperor well, but learning that a section of his army had been cut to pieces by the Lombards he determined not to settle in Italy. Accordingly he marched southward by Naples to Reggio, where he crossed and settled at Syracuse.

664. Syracuse was a convenient centre for the supervision of the empire, and Constans remained there for four years.

During that time he crossed to Africa and recovered Carthage and other cities which had fallen into Moslem hands. But he suffered a serious reverse at Tripoli, and was content to leave that as the boundary of the empire.

At Syracuse Constans was assassinated. An Armenian 668.
named Mezecius succeeded him, but when he had reigned for a few months Constantine IV., the son of Constans, arrived with an armament and put him to death.

Constans had been a somewhat severe monarch and took little pains to be popular, but he had done his work well. He had reorganised the provinces, improved the army, and kept the Moslems from further encroachment. In his young days he had even bearded the pope. Life in Constantinople had long been made insupportable by bitter theological discussion, especially about the precise nature of our Lord. Constans, young enough to believe that such matters could be settled by edict, issued one known as "The Type," forbidding that the subject should be again mentioned. Pope Martin held a synod at Rome, and condemned the edict. Constans said little for the moment, but some years later he had Martin arrested, carried to Constantinople, and tried. He was exiled and died in exile.

When Constantine IV. had put Mezecius to death he re- 668.
turned to Constantinople. He reigned for seventeen years, mostly years of warfare. Muavia had won the caliphate and determined to conquer the empire. Accordingly he attacked Africa, Sicily and Asia Minor. His forces held Cyzicus in the Sea of Marmora for four years, and from that base gave Constantinople no rest. But Constantine did not lose heart, and in the end he proved more than a match for the Saracen. About this time some one invented a liquid compound called Greek Fire. It was a mixture of asphalt, nitre, sulphur and tow, or something of the sort, and when once it was lighted it burned with great obstinacy. Moreover, it could be squirted through tubes in a burning state, and Constantine, having armed some of his ships with it, played havoc with the enemy.

When the Saracens had beleaguered Constantinople for several years and made many attacks upon it, all of which were repelled by the emperor with great loss, they got utterly discouraged and retired. The retreat was as disastrous as the siege. The greater part of their fleet perished in a storm off Lycia, and their land forces were cut to pieces by the imperial troops. So great was the failure that the caliph willingly made peace and actually engaged to pay tribute to Byzantium.

The prolonged attack upon Constantinople by the Moslems had been watched with much concern by the European Powers, and when it failed representatives came from various Western nations, including the Franks, to congratulate Constantine upon his triumph. The congratulations were well deserved. The history of the Byzantine Empire may at times have been inglorious enough, but for many centuries it held the Eastern gate of Europe against Antichrist.

Constantine's later years were more peaceful. The Bulgarians, a non-Aryan race allied with the Magyars and dwelling north of the Black Sea, crossed the Danube and attacked the Slavs. Constantine sent an expedition to the mouth of the
679. Danube, but when it was defeated he did not further interfere. Accordingly the Bulgarians settled amongst the Slavs in the lands between the Danube and the Balkans, where a mixed nation sprang up which still bears their name.

685. Constantine IV. was succeeded by his son Justinian II. He was a boy of sixteen and as he grew older he showed that he had the family energy, but not the family balance. His father left the empire at peace with foreign nations, and he would have done well had he continued on the same lines. But he preferred a policy of adventure.

Justinian began by invading Bulgaria and trying to push the Roman frontier back again to the Danube. He was successful for a time, and returned with 30,000 captives. From these he picked a Bulgarian corps for service in Asia. It was a risky thing to do and it proved his ruin.

Constantine had left the realm at peace with the caliph, and

Abd al Melik, now caliph, renewed the peace with his son. In 688.
the renewal it was stipulated that the Mardaites, unconquered Christian tribes in the mountains of Lebanon, should be migrated by the emperor. There was no sufficient reason for this step, and much to be said against it. But Justinian agreed and 12,000 hardy highlanders were transplanted from districts where they served as a bulwark against the Moslem to districts where they were not of the same value. It may be, however, that the emigration was voluntary, in which case Justinian cannot be blamed.

It will be remembered that Muavia, after his failure at Constantinople, undertook to pay tribute to the Byzantine Empire. The tribute had been paid faithfully in the coin then current. But the caliph started a mint of his own and sent the tribute to Justinian in Arabian coin. With inconceivable folly Justinian refused to accept the new coin, and the caliph refused any other. War ensued, the Moslem troops bearing aloft the torn treaty as a banner. A great battle was fought and during the battle many of the Bulgarians deserted to the enemy. It was just what Justinian might have expected, but so maddened was the emperor that when he returned to Nicomedia he slew such of the Bulgarians as had remained faithful.

Justinian's home policy was no wiser than his foreign. To obtain money for his foolish wars he taxed the people unmercifully. His financial ministers tortured unwilling taxpayers. To make things worse he must needs emulate the emperor, whose name he bore, by lavishing money on quite unnecessary palaces.

Oppression at home and defeat abroad will soon ruin a monarch, and at last Leontius, a general who had incurred the emperor's displeasure and feared for his life, conspired against him and thrust him from the throne. He was banished to 695.
Cherson, and his chief ministers were slain by the infuriated people. It would have been better had they slain Justinian also.

Leontius ruled for three disastrous years. The Saracens,

encouraged by their victory over Justinian, overran Asia Minor
697. and Africa. Carthage, captured by Hassan, was recaptured by Leontius. But next year the Saracens returned and regained the city, driving the imperial fleet from the harbour. Whether the defeated officers had been disobedient or not we cannot tell, but they feared to face Leontius and conspired to dethrone him. The conspiracy was successful, he was relegated to a monastery, and Aspimarus, the admiral, became emperor in his stead.
698. Aspimar, who took the throne name of Tiberius II., reigned for seven years. He defeated the Saracens in Asia Minor, recovered Cilicia and occupied Antioch. Had Justinian II. been slain when he was deposed, Tiberius might have continued to reign with advantage to the empire. But the exiled monarch never ceased to plot. Tiberius, aware of the plotting, ordered that he should be driven from Cherson. He fled to the Khazars and from them to the Bulgarians. The Bulgarian King lent him an army and he marched upon Constantinople. He
705. had partisans within the city and obtained an entrance. He captured the palace, seized Tiberius and had Leontius brought from his monastic retreat. Then he sat in the hippodrome with his feet upon their necks, amidst the cheers of the fickle and worthless mob. They were then led away to execution.

Justinian had learned little wisdom by adversity. His second reign lasted for five years, and during it he was chiefly occupied in taking vengeance on all who opposed him. The magistrates of Cherson were roasted on spits, other enemies were sewn in sacks and cast into the Bosphorus. An armament was commissioned to level Cherson with the ground. It was destroyed in a storm and 70,000 perished. Justinian sent another, but the men, disgusted with their task, joined the citizens of Cherson in a revolution and proclaimed their general, Philippicus, emperor. The armament then returned to Constantinople, and Justinian, deserted by all, was seized and be-
711. headed. His son, a boy of six, was also slain. They were the last scions of the house of Heraclius, which had held the imperial throne for a century.

Three rulers, Philippicus, Anastasius II. and Theodosius III. succeeded each other within six years. During their reigns the Bulgarians marched up to the very gates of Constantinople, and the Saracens crossed the frontiers of the empire on every side. They subdued Sardinia and overran Cappadocia and Pontus. Antioch in Pisidia fell, and much of southern Asia Minor. Africa was entirely in Saracen hands, and Moslem hosts had traversed Spain even to the Bay of Biscay.

Walid I., who was now caliph, determined to make another attempt upon Constantinople. Accordingly he prepared a vast armament, an army of 100,000 men, a fleet of 1,000 sail. He died before the expedition set forth and left the task to Soliman, his brother.

There was in the imperial army at this time a general of marked ability named Leo, a native of Isauria. Anastasius II. had recognised his worth, and made him commander of troops in Asia. Theodosius III. was now emperor, a worthy man but not strong enough to grapple with the difficulties of the time, and nowise coveting the important position into which he had been thrust. Aware that the Moslems were advancing on the capital, Leo's army revolted, left their station in Asia Minor, and marched home. The troops sent against them by Theodosius were easily worsted, whereupon Theodosius consulted the Senate and voluntarily abdicated in favour of Leo. Leo was then formally elected emperor, and Theodosius retired into 717.
private life. He deserves credit for his self-abnegation and good judgment, for events proved that he had thus peacefully made way for the one man who could save the empire.

CHAPTER V.

A DYNASTY OF REFORMERS.

717. LEO III.—Leo III. was the son of wealthy parents who had emigrated from Isauria to Thrace. He was well educated, entered the army in the reign of Justinian II. as aide-de-camp, rose rapidly, and was appointed by Anastasius II. governor of the Anatolic theme.

Leo was not only a successful soldier and a favourite in the army, but also a man of convictions, having enlightened views on economical and religious questions. His descendants followed in his footsteps for sixty years, the famous Heraclian dynasty being worthily followed by the Isaurian. It was well for the empire and for Europe when Leo began to reign.

Leo ascended the throne in April, and in five months the Moslems were upon him. But he had had time to prepare, the capital had been splendidly provisioned, its fortifications repaired, its garrison strengthened. The emperor also prepared a fleet, not intending to cope with the Saracens in a great engagement, but hoping to keep them out of the Bosphorus, so that he might be able to obtain supplies from the Black Sea. If he could accomplish this he knew that the blockade would be harder upon the Saracens than upon Constantinople.

In the autumn the Moslems arrived, an innumerable host. The land forces did not tarry in Asia, but were ferried across the Hellespont that they might blockade Constantinople on the Thracian side. When the army had crossed, the fleet advanced through the Sea of Marmora towards the Golden Horn, meaning to secure the Bosphorus. But this was not so easy. Leo was ready, and when he perceived the heavily laden ships toil-

ing against the stream, he attacked them with swift vessels armed with Greek fire. Twenty Saracen ships were destroyed, the rest drew back and did not attempt further passage.

The result of the first engagement encouraged the citizens, and they bore the winter siege with equanimity. They had indeed little to bear for they were well-housed, well-clothed, and well-fed. The besiegers, on the other hand, many of them accustomed to a warm climate, suffered terribly, men and horses dying in great numbers. Moslemah, the caliph's brother, who was in command of the expedition, sent for reinforcements, and in the spring another army and another fleet arrived. The land forces remained on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, and the fleet crept up the straits as far as possible, in the hope of cutting off the city from the Black Sea.

The new ships were mostly from Syria and Egypt, and as the Moslems had but a limited supply of seamen professing their own faith, they had pressed many Christian sailors into their service. These were half-hearted, and when they found themselves in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, they deserted in considerable numbers. Encouraged by the statements of the deserters, Leo took advantage of a favourable wind, and attacked the Moslem transports as they lay at anchor. The attack was successful, some of the ships were burned, some driven ashore, some captured. The Christian sailors joined the Byzantine fleet, the Moslems fled. Leo's troops then landed in Bithynia, and routed the Saracen forces there.

By these victories on land and sea, Leo isolated the Moslem army which was lying in Thrace. They could no longer obtain supplies from Asia, and they had exhausted the resources of Thrace. Famine stared them in the face.

Matters were made worse for the Saracens by the Bulgarians, who descended upon them, and in a battle at Hadrianople, slew twenty thousand.

Retreat was now imperative and Moslemah raised the siege. 71
His land forces fought their way across Asia Minor with heavy

loss, the fleet was annihilated by storms. The mightiest expedition the Saracens had ever undertaken proved an utter failure. Such was the effect of the disaster that no similar attempt was made until centuries had passed.

The issue of this conflict was momentous, and Leo can scarcely be too highly praised for his achievement. Had he failed there was little to check the Moslems short of the French frontier.

732. Fourteen years after the Saracens had received this rebuff at the eastern gate of Europe, they were also defeated by Charles Martel at Poitiers, and thus driven back from the western gate. Leo the Isaurian and Charles Martel must stand in the front rank of the heroes of Christendom.

721. Constantinople being now free from danger Leo was able to turn his attention to home affairs. Reform was greatly needed, for the empire had long been under a cloud, and poverty and ignorance prevailed. Heraclius and Leo had bravely saved the empire from destruction at the hand of foreign foes, but if the salvation were to be permanent, there must be a general uplifting of the people.

Leo entered with much earnestness into the work of reform. He infused new energy into the military establishment, consolidated the theme system, and organised the armies in such a way that they ceased to be a menace, and became a source of strength to the empire.

The emperor also strengthened the police, and did his utmost to suppress brigandage and piracy. As a result commerce revived, and agriculture, so that districts which had been reduced to beggary again lifted their heads. Wealth increased, and with it revenue, so that whilst Leo could obtain more money by direct taxation than before, the burden was not so heavy upon the people.

It is amusing to read that an outcry was raised against Leo because he tried to introduce the registration of births, ordering that a register should be kept of all the males born in his dominions. Leo was likened to Pharaoh, and it was

asserted that with all their wickedness the Saracens had never done anything quite so bad.

Through anarchy in the empire, and lack of education among the people, jurisprudence had fallen upon evil times. Few could read Latin, and the works of Justinian were no longer studied. Magistrates administered justice either in accordance with local usage, or upon such principles as seemed right in their own eyes. Leo accordingly compiled and issued a legal handbook in Greek, which became authoritative in the courts of the empire. It was called the *Eclogia*, and its brevity and precision made it extremely valuable. The emperor also sanctioned various minor codes, relating to military, agricultural, and maritime law.

The military code was necessary, because of the changes that had taken place in the old system, as Asia Minor became gradually cleared of the Saracens.

The agricultural code shows that the old Roman system of cultivation by peasants bound to the soil had largely passed away, and that the land was now cultivated either by tenants paying a fixed rent in kind or by villagers holding land in common. This was a healthy change, for it decreased slavery and serfdom. It was one of the beneficial results which followed the settlement of the freer northern tribes, and the levelling up of the classes which frequently follows invasion.

Leo's maritime code shows the state of commercial legislation and even of commerce itself at that period. Apparently the trade of the Mediterranean had fallen largely into the hands of companies, perhaps because the risk of loss by piracy was too great for the individual to face.

Leo's ecclesiastical reforms were the subject of fierce contention, and have remained the subject of fierce criticism. To understand them we must remember that the civilisation of the empire had sunk to a low level. In the most important cities culture might still be found, but the masses of the people were extremely ignorant. As a result, many had lapsed into something hardly distinguishable from idolatry. They wor-

shipped images, pictures and relics. The more enlightened, doubtless, used these things merely as helps to devotion; but the majority were simply fetich worshippers.

The priests encouraged the prevailing superstition for the sake of gain. They pretended to the people that pictures had been painted by angels and that images had been made without hands. To pictures, images and relics they attributed miraculous powers. Few churches or monasteries were without their private fetich, and the priests drew a fine revenue from the ignorance of the people. Well might the Moslems declare that Christians were but idolators under another name.

This sad condition of affairs throughout the empire was worsened by the monastic system. There will always be found a certain number of men and women who believe that they can best maintain their souls in health by withdrawing from that world in which it has pleased the Creator to place them. So long as the number who thus isolate themselves is not excessive it is of little consequence. But when the fashion becomes common it is a menace to the State, and there are few countries where monasticism has not at one time or other had to be checked in the public interest.

In Leo's reign the monastic craze had assumed mischievous proportions. It was common for wealthy men and women to endow monasteries and convents with their wealth, and to retire to them in the prime of life. They thus robbed the State of three things which it sorely needed: of population, of wealth, and of honest citizenship. Moreover the monasteries were hotbeds of superstition and used all their influence against reform.

With the twin evils of superstition and monasticism Leo and his successors waged uncompromising warfare. It is not to be imagined that the Isaurian monarchs were merely puritans. They loved gaiety. They encouraged music and painting. Constantine V. played the harp, and sent a gift of an organ to Pepin of France; the first organ in Western Europe.

They patronised the drama, they encouraged popular concerts. The pope, indeed, accused them of substituting harps, cymbals and flutes for sacred pictures and images. They were in truth opponents of austerity; Lutherans rather than puritans. The Reformation of the eighth century was animated in some ways by the spirit which animated that of the fifteenth.

Though image and picture worship were chiefly attacked, Leo III. and Constantine who succeeded him were opponents of Mariolatry and of saint worship as well. Though they spoke of the mother of our Lord with high respect, they denied her intercessory power, and the intercessory power of saints. They also denied the magical potency of relics. Like the reformers of a later date, they entered the lists against superstition, and spiritual and mental degradation. Constantine, indeed, was so far advanced that he objected altogether to the use of the word saint, and spoke of Peter the Apostle, not of Saint Peter.

Unfortunately, like many other religious reformers in high places, the Isaurian monarchs thought that they could govern religious belief by edict. Monasteries might be dealt with in this way of course, so many were abolished and the monks were given their choice between exile and respectable citizenship. Some chose exile, and large numbers emigrated at this 726.
time to Greece, Sicily and Italy. But the religious attitude of a people cannot be changed by edict, and in many places the emperors were defied. Especially was this the case in Italy. The pope was strongly in favour of image worship, and he treated the edicts with contempt. We shall see later what effect this had upon the history of the empire.

Leo was not naturally a persecutor, and he tried to win his way rather than to force it. As a rule educated laymen were favourable to his views, the army followed him, and the eastern provinces acquiesced. Europe was at this time at a lower intellectual level than the East, and Italy was worst of all.

Pope Gregory III., the last bishop of Rome for whose con- 730.
secration the consent of the emperor was asked, held a council

at Rome and excommunicated the opponents of image worship. Leo sent an expedition to arrest him, but nothing came of it, and he saw that it was hopeless to attempt to coerce Italy. Accordingly he allowed the pope to have his own way in Rome and Northern Italy, but he deprived him of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Sicily, Calabria and Illyricum, placing those districts under the control of the patriarch of Constantinople. The change was rendered easier because of the number of Greeks who had migrated to Sicily and Southern Italy, some flying from the Saracens, some from Leo himself. Leo was careful not to press his views unduly amongst these, so they did not throw off their allegiance. But Rome, Ravenna and Venice recognised the authority of the pope. Thus began the distinction between the Latin and Greek Churches, the Western Latin Church recognising the pope, the Eastern Greek Church recognising the patriarch. We shall find later that this breach was further widened in the ninth century, and that in the eleventh century the Greek and Latin Churches became permanently divided.

The later years of Leo's reign were comparatively peaceful. The Saracens made no further attempt upon Constantinople, but they invaded Asia Minor on various occasions. The year
739. before Leo died the caliph put three armies in the field, and did much mischief, but Leo won a great victory at Acroinon in the Anatolic theme, and the Moslems had to retire. The imperial boundary was now fixed at the Taurus mountains.

740. Leo died when he had reigned for twenty-three years, and was succeeded by his son Constantine V., a young man of twenty-two.

741. CONSTANTINE V.—Constantine V. had been his father's colleague, and was imbued with his spirit. During his reign many monasteries were dissolved, but his successors allowed some of them to be re-established.

Early in his reign Constantine had to march against the Saracens, and during his absence Artavasdos, his brother-in-

law, general of the Obsequian theme, seized the capital and proclaimed himself emperor. Constantine returned and besieged the city, and as it had not been specially provisioned it quickly yielded. Artavasdos fled, but was captured and rendered incapable of doing further mischief.

During this reign the empire suffered from a bubonic 745.
plague which lasted several years and did great havoc. It arose in Syria, and travelled by Egypt, Africa, Sicily, Calabria and Greece to Constantinople. As plague generally follows the track of commerce, the roundabout route is significant. In earlier times it would have gone straight across Asia Minor with the caravans. But now there was little communication between Asia Minor and Syria, and the direct caravan traffic between Constantinople and the East had ceased.

When the plague abated Constantine took measures for re- 747.
populating the capital. He induced many Greeks of all classes of society to emigrate to Constantinople from the continent and from the islands of the Ægean. The gaps thus left were speedily filled by Slavs, and the population of Greece became more Slavonic than ever. On the other hand, the population of Constantinople became more Greek.

Constantine restored the aqueduct which the emperor Valens had built in the fourth century to supply the capital with water. It had been broken down by the Avars in the reign of Heraclius. Seven thousand workmen were employed in the restoration. The fact that it was thought prudent to undertake such a work shows how much more quiet the northern tribes had become.

In military operations Constantine commanded in person, and he was a successful warrior. He protected Asia Minor from Saracen bands, and even extended his sphere of influence to the Euphrates. In Europe also he was successful, not absolutely subduing the Bulgarians, but fortifying the passes of the Balkans against them, and keeping them well in check.

During this reign there was civil war in Bulgaria, and 762.
200,000 discontented Slavs left the country, and begged for

admission into the empire. Constantine received them kindly and settled them in Bithynia. Here again we see signs of enlightened policy. Some of the earlier emperors would have cut them to pieces or sold them as slaves.

Constantine reigned for thirty-five years, so that the reigns of Leo and his son extended over a period of fifty-eight years. They were years of progress, and when Constantine died at the age of fifty-seven he left a full treasury, a devoted army, and a prosperous realm.

775. LEO IV.—Leo IV., who now ascended the throne, continued the religious policy of his father and grandfather, though ill-health made him less active in pursuing it. He married Irene, an accomplished Athenian lady, and their son was named Constantine. Leo was consumptive, so to secure the succession, and with the approval of the Senate, he conferred upon Constantine the title of emperor. Leo only reigned four and a half years, and was succeeded by his son, then ten years of age; Irene acting as regent.

780. CONSTANTINE VI AND IRENE.—Irene was intensely ambitious, fond of power for power's sake. She had been educated in Greece, and favoured image worship. Accordingly she set herself to reverse the Iconoclastic policy of her predecessors. At first she walked warily, but when she had got rid of the old officials, and filled their places with men who favoured her views, she made a determined effort to re-establish image worship.

The policy of Irene split the empire into factions. Conspiracy was rife and the prosperity of the empire was checked. The Slavs revolted, the Bulgarians ravaged Thrace, and Saracen armies led by the famous Haroun al Raschid overran Asia
784. Minor. Irene had to buy peace from foreign foes by paying tribute.

When Constantine VI. came of age, Irene still clung to power, and though she was for a time set aside, he was weak enough to accept her as colleague. She used the power thus

recovered to his ruin. He lost popularity, and when his mother perceived this she determined to dethrone him. The officials were bribed, and the unfortunate man was deposed, and deprived of his sight.

It seems incomprehensible that after such brutality Irene should have been permitted to reign for five years. Yet it was so. During her reign one of the most striking events in European history took place, the crowning of Charlemagne as Augustus Romanorum. That we may understand the significance of this event, we must for a moment diverge.

We have seen how by slow degrees, Rome and Constantinople had been falling apart. There is no need to blame the later emperors for this. If we omit the years of revolution which followed the fall of Justinian II. we must acknowledge that from the accession of Heraclius onward for a century and a half to the accession of Irene the emperors were well up to the average, and sometimes above it. But they had to face great difficulties. The Persian and Saracenic wars strained the empire to the utmost. Whilst these were in progress it was vain for the emperors to attempt to govern Italy. They were merely absentee landlords, and like such always unpopular. This inevitable abdication of the functions of government left Italy in the hands of two rulers, the king of Lombardy and the pope of Rome, the former a temporal monarch, the latter, by pressure of circumstances, temporal as well as spiritual.

The gulf between Rome and Constantinople was widened by the controversy about images. The popes objected to Leo's policy, and defied him. Leo revenged himself as we have seen by withdrawing certain districts from papal jurisdiction, and placing them under the patriarch of Constantinople. He could not coerce the pope, so he clipped his wings, and left him to his own devices.

Leo's policy left the pope and the king of the Lombards face to face. Now, willing though the pope was to be a temporal ruler, he was not strong enough to stand alone, and when

the Lombards overran his dominions he had to seek a champion. Knowing that there was no hope for him in the East, he looked westward. The Franks were then well to the front.

732. Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace, had earned the gratitude of Christendom by overthrowing the Moslems at Poitiers. Pope Gregory II. corresponded with him, and Pope Gregory III. eagerly sought his help. Charles refused to intermeddle, but his son Pepin, desirous of obtaining the influence of the bishop of Rome with the Frankish clergy in order that they might make him king, twice came to the papal rescue. He defeated Aistulf, the Lombard king, and bestowed upon the pope the territories which he wrung from his grasp. In return, the pope gratefully endowed Pepin with the title Patricius Romanorum. Pepin may have had no right to donate to the pope lands which, properly speaking, perhaps, belonged to the empire, and the pope may have had no right to bestow the title. But the fact that these things were done shows for how little the authority of the Byzantine emperor now counted in Italy.

773. Charlemagne, son of Pepin, invaded Italy at the solicitation of pope Hadrian, thrust Desiderius, the Lombard king, from the throne, himself assumed the crown and added Northern Italy to his dominions. He also visited Rome, was received by pope and people as suzerain, and confirmed the donation of territory which his father Pepin had made to the papal see twenty years before.

Safe under the patronage of Charlemagne, Italy remained undisturbed for twenty years. During those years Constantine VI. and Irene were ruling in Constantinople. Towards the end of the eighth century there were fierce faction fights in Rome; accusations were made against Leo III., now pope, and he had to fly for his life to the court of Charlemagne. Charlemagne sent him back to Rome with a sufficient guard and promised to follow him speedily.

800. Accordingly the year 800 found Charlemagne in Rome with a Frankish host. After inquiring into the charges against

the pope and formally acquitting him, he remained in the city for a time. On Christmas Day he attended mass in St. Peter's. When the reading of the gospel ended the pope rose, advanced to where Charles knelt in prayer, anointed him, and placed on his head a golden crown, whilst those around, doubtless tutored for the occasion, cried: "Karolo Augusto a Deo coronato magno et pacifico imperatori vita et victoria" (Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*). Thus was the divorce between Rome and Constantinople formally pronounced, and the marriage between Rome and the Teuton solemnised.

Three hundred and twenty-four years had passed since Odovacer compelled the abdication of Romulus Augustulus, and thereafter by formal transfer permitted the West to sink into the East. From that time forward Constantinople had been supreme. But it was supreme no longer.

Perhaps neither the pope nor Charlemagne contemplated the division of the empire. They may have even believed that their action would promote its union. There seemed to be an idea that as the empire had been usurped by Irene, a woman there was no true ruler and the people had a right to choose Charlemagne, who possessed the real power in the West, as the successor of Constantine VI. The pope may, therefore, have thought that his act would lead to the unification of the empire.

It is possible also that Charlemagne was taken by surprise by the pope's action, and was not altogether pleased. He was anxious enough to obtain the imperial crown, but he was shrewd enough to know that the pope could not donate it, that it must come by way of Constantinople. Now he was even then seeking the hand of Irene in marriage. She was then sole empress, and had he been successful the issue must have been momentous. But the precipitate action of Leo III. irritated the court at Constantinople and spoiled his chances. Two years later Irene was deposed and Charlemagne's opportunity was gone for ever.

Instead, therefore, of the coronation welding the empire

together, it made the severance permanent. The West had set up a new line of sovereigns, the East retained the old line, and the two did not rule jointly over one empire, as in the olden time, but ruled as rivals and enemies, "each denouncing the other as an impostor" (Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*).

Still, looking at all the circumstances, it must be confessed that the papal action was justifiable, and that the cleavage which perhaps unexpectedly followed was for the common good.

We have but to add that Irene's selfish and unnatural reign was at last stopped by conspiracy. She was sent to a nunnery, and her treasurer, Nicephorus, ascended the throne. With Irene's reign the Isaurian dynasty came to an end.

CHAPTER VI.

BYZANTIUM AT ITS ZENITH.

NICEPHORUS.—Nicephorus, first Irene's treasurer and afterwards her successor, was of Pisidian birth and Arabian extraction. When he ascended the throne he was in the prime of life. His enemies called him avaricious, but this merely meant that he was a careful financier. He liked to have a full treasury, but he could spend generously when there was occasion. He made monasteries and charitable institutions pay taxes. This had become necessary, for these institutions were withdrawing much property from the nation and defrauding the exchequer. Nicephorus therefore made them pay their share, and if he thereby gained the hatred of the priests he lightened the burdens of the people. 802.

Nicephorus was a consistent opponent of image worship, and he reversed the policy of Irene, but he did not persecute. Unfortunately toleration was not popular in certain circles. Religion at Constantinople had become largely a question of the ins and the outs, the spoils went to the conqueror, and kings who steered between the parties were loved by neither. Yet there were a few men who believed in freedom of conscience, and Nicephorus was one of them. He was no weakling moreover. The civil power was with him supreme, and however the monks might grumble they must obey.

The relations between Nicephorus and Charlemagne were at first amicable. A treaty was concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle by which Venice, Istria, the coast of Dalmatia and the south of Italy were recognised as subject to the Eastern Empire; whilst Rome, Ravenna and the Pentapolis were recognised as belonging to the Western. Unfortunately this peace was broken and 803.

810. a desultory war ensued. When peace was again concluded, the frontiers were left as they had been before.

During this reign Venice became the headquarters of the Venetian government. Heraclea had previously been their capital.

Nicephorus refused to pay the Saracens the tribute which Irene had promised. Haroun al Raschid was caliph, a man with whose name the *Arabian Nights* have made us familiar. He was a barbarous man, and he laid Asia Minor waste. The first army sent against him by Nicephorus rebelled. Nicephorus crushed the rebellion and himself led an army against the Moslems, but was defeated. Finding it impossible to stop their ravages, he consented to the tribute and thus made peace. The
809. death of Haroun shortly afterwards gave relief to the empire, as it was followed by civil war amongst the Moslems.

At this time the Bulgarians again waxed troublesome. They were now governed by Crumn, a cruel but able king. Nicephorus crossed the Balkans, and in his first engagement defeated Crumn, but a few days later the Byzantine troops were
811. surprised in a night attack and overwhelmed. Nicephorus was slain, and his son Stauracius was severely wounded. When the army rallied at Adrianople they elected Stauracius as emperor, but he was a dying man, and he soon made way for Michael, his brother-in-law.

812. MICHAEL I.—Michael I. reigned only one year, but managed to do much mischief. He conciliated the monks at the expense of the people by relieving their institutions from taxation. To please them also he persecuted the Paulicians with barbarity.

The Paulicians were good people who objected to image worship, Church establishment and the priestly hierarchy. They were therefore counted enemies of the human race. But the Byzantine emperors had long tolerated them, and they were loyal subjects. A persecution now began which went on at intervals for nearly half a century. In the end, after

thousands of them had been slain, many of them escaped to Melitene, where they found amongst the Moslems that protection which their fellow-Christians denied them. We shall refer to them again in a subsequent chapter.

Michael acted wisely in recognising Charlemagne as a legitimate emperor and in treating with him as with an equal. But the act was not approved by the Byzantines.

Surrounding himself with monks Michael quite reversed his father-in-law's tolerant policy and removed Iconoclasts from office both in the civil service and the army. This exasperated the soldiers, who were mostly Iconoclasts, and they were ripe for rebellion. When, therefore, there was a war with the Bulgarians, and Michael proved an incompetent leader, they deposed him and proclaimed Leo, their general, emperor in his stead.

LEO V.—Leo V. (the Armenian) now reigned. He was an Iconoclast at heart, but wished to give freedom of opinion to all. But the ecclesiastics disapproved, and he had little peace during his reign. 813.

A few days after Leo's accession Crumn appeared before the walls of Constantinople. Leo proposed a conference, and tried to seize his adversary. Crumn escaped, but his attendants were captured or slain. The Bulgarians in their retreat took terrible vengeance, wasting the country and carrying great numbers of the people into slavery. But Crumn died that year, and when his successor invaded the empire Leo defeated him with great loss. The Bulgarians now begged for peace and remained quiet for a generation. 814.

Leo reigned well. He restored discipline in the army, suppressed bribery in the courts of justice, established a court of review, and collected the revenue on more equitable principles. He repaired the fortresses in the Balkans, and placed the frontiers in a state of defence. Leo had many merits. But his merits did not prevent conspiracy, and he was foully murdered whilst at worship in his private chapel.

820. MICHAEL II.—Michael II. succeeded. He was a native of Amorium, entered the army as a private and worked his way up to the rank of general. He had helped Leo to win the throne, but afterwards fell into disgrace and was under sentence of death when Leo was assassinated. He was brought from the prison cell to fill his place.

Michael's accession was a signal for widespread rebellion. The most serious rebellion was that led by Thomas, an Asiatic general. Thomas espoused the cause of the people, especially the subject races and the exiles. He was at first rather a social reformer than a rebel, but his followers soon got out of hand and raided and ravaged in the usual way.

The revolution led by Thomas lasted for three years. Asia was overrun and Constantinople was besieged. The siege was a mistake, for the rebel army was largely undisciplined, and to such a force the capital was impregnable. Probably Thomas hoped to be aided by partisans within the city itself. He twice tried to take it by storm, but was unsuccessful. His fleet was destroyed, and the Bulgarians came south and slew 20,000 of his men. He had to take refuge in Arcadiopolis, where he was himself besieged. After five months his followers surrendered him and he was executed.

815. Whilst the Byzantine government was thus occupied, the caliphate of Cordova had been torn asunder by intestine feud, and 15,000 Arabs were driven from Spain. Most of these went to Alexandria. During the rebellion of Thomas the Byzantines had to draw in their outlying forces, and the island of Crete was left undefended. A force of adventurous Arabs,
825. taking advantage of the opportunity, sailed from Alexandria and captured the island. Others joined them, and they made Crete their home, intermarrying with the people. Michael II. tried to drive them out but failed, and the Saracens retained possession of the island for nearly a century and a half.

827. About this time also the Saracens obtained possession of Sicily. Euphemius, a Byzantine officer, rebelled against the governor and slew him, not without justification. Driven from

the island, Euphemius took refuge in Africa and sought the help of the Moors. These helped him gladly, for they longed to obtain possession of the island. Once landed they did not leave it again. The natives do not seem to have made much resistance either in Crete or Sicily. To them it merely meant a change of tax collectors, and the Saracen arm was perhaps less heavy than the Byzantine. Reinforcements came from Byzantium, and the Saracens were checked for a moment, then reinforcements reached them from Africa, and they advanced again. They made steady progress, but the Byzantine defence was stubborn, and the Saracen conquest was not complete until 878.

The loss of Crete and Sicily did not greatly vex the Byzantine government. The outlying provinces were valued chiefly for their revenue, and Crete and Sicily had become unremunerative.

Michael II., following the example of his predecessors, kept up friendly relations with the Western Powers. One of his correspondents was Louis I. of France (le Debonnaire). After reigning for nine years he died and left his crown to Theophilus, his son. 829.

THEOPHILUS.—The new emperor had advantages his father lacked. He was not only talented and industrious, but he had been well-educated, and trained in the art of government. He was a strong Iconoclast, and treated the image worshippers with severity. Yet his own palace was full of them, and his queen Theodora worshipped images in secret.

So many fugitives from Persia and Syria took refuge in the empire that the caliph made it an excuse for war. He invaded Cappadocia and his fleet descended on Mysia. Theophilus retaliated, and sacked Zapetra the caliph's favourite city. The caliph swore to avenge himself by destroying Amorium the 838.
emperor's birthplace. Accordingly he marched from Tarsus with a huge army, defeated Theophilus with great slaughter, stormed Amorium, and slew every human being in the place.

Notwithstanding his ill success with the Saracens on the frontier, Theophilus was a successful ruler, loving justice and hating corruption, so that the empire prospered during his reign. He maintained diplomatic dealings with the important sovereigns in Europe and Asia. He reigned for thirteen years,
842. and died in the prime of life.

MICHAEL III.—Michael III., a child of four years, succeeded Theophilus, his mother Theodora being regent. Theodora was a devout image worshipper, and set herself to reverse her deceased husband's policy, deposing the patriarch and sending Iconoclastic bishops into exile.

Yet Theodora was loyal to her husband's memory in some ways. When a council of the Church assembled she demanded that they should pass an act pardoning all that he had done, and that they should give her a certificate declaring that God had also pardoned him. When they demurred she declared that if they did not yield she would revert to his policy, so they yielded and gave her the written attestation she required.

During Michael's long minority the image worshippers triumphed; the Iconoclasts were bitterly persecuted, and many were driven into exile. Amongst those most cruelly dealt with were the Paulician nonconformists, of whom we shall speak more fully in our next chapter.

856. When Michael III. was eighteen years of age his mother resigned in his favour. He had been badly trained, and was a hard drinker. The mother is blamed, but it is not easy for a woman to control a prince. Michael had many willing to lead him astray, amongst whom his uncle Bardas, brother of Theodora, was one of the worst.

At this time Ignatius was patriarch of Constantinople. He was a good man, and on one occasion refused the sacrament to Bardas because of his evil life. Bardas persuaded Michael to banish him, and in his place Photius, chief secretary of State, was elected head of the Eastern Church. Photius was a man

of noble birth and profound learning, quite suitable for the position, but forced into it against his will.

In order more formally to ratify the deposition and election, Michael summoned a general council. A general council required the concurrence of the pope, so Michael asked pope Nicholas to send delegates. He did so, but instructed his delegates to make certain demands with regard to the papal patrimony and privileges in exchange for their consent. At the 861.
synod the papal legates agreed to the deposition and election, but obtained none of the pope's demands. Perhaps their complaisance had been purchased, at any rate when they returned the pope refused to ratify their act.

The pope now held a synod at Rome, deposed and excom- 863.
municated Photius, and ordered him and Ignatius to appear in person before his court that he might settle their differences. The Popes were at this time beginning to claim power over the Church in general, but their claims had never been allowed in Byzantium, and pope Nicholas overreached himself. The emperor was full of wrath, and the citizens of Byzantium were equally angry. Indeed Ignatius and Photius were wholly with them in the matter, for neither would have dreamt of submitting to papal jurisdiction.

On the crest, therefore, of a wave of popular enthusiasm Michael III. rode to victory. A synod was summoned at Con- 866.
stantinople and attended by the patriarch, the emperor, and 1,000 bishops and abbots. Eight articles were drawn up declaring that the Roman Church had departed from the true faith. Of these, six dealt with matters of subordinate interest. But two were of high importance. One denounced the celibacy of the priesthood, terming it a snare of Satan. Another condemned as rank heresy the Roman doctrine that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son. The pope was declared 867.
unworthy of his See, and was formally excommunicated by the synod.

There were various turns of fortune after this, and attempts to restore amity, but fifteen years afterwards the pope renewed

882. the ban. The Byzantine emperors and clergy adhered to the statements of doctrine laid down by the synod of Constantinople, and they are held by the Eastern Church to this day.

866. The year of the synod at Constantinople was the year of Bardas' death. He had been made a colleague by Michael, but presumed too much upon his position and was slain. His place was filled by Basil, a Macedonian, who was raised to the

867. dignity of a Cæsar. As Michael lived very carelessly, Basil got the reins into his own hands and, when the time was ripe, Michael was assassinated. Basil succeeded him, and the dynasty begun in so unpromising a fashion held the Byzantine throne with credit for 200 years. Before we proceed to deal with this dynasty, it will be well to consider the position now occupied by the Byzantine Empire.

Constantinople was in the ninth century the premier city not only of Europe but of the world. Neither in Europe nor in Asia had she a rival. The pope of Rome might magnify his office if he liked, but Rome herself had fallen into decay. In France there were many cities, but they were comparatively insignificant. In the ninth century Constantinople was easily first, as much ahead of other European cities as London is to-day.

Constantinople owed its greatness to its commercial prosperity and its military strength. Geographically it was at the centre of the known world. Such wealth as Europe had lay mostly on the shores of the Mediterranean. England, France and Germany were on the fringe. Italy had decayed, Venice had only begun. At that time the commerce of Europe centred at Constantinople more completely than it has ever since done in any one city. Moreover, Constantinople was the entrepôt for the commerce of Asia. The victories of the Saracens in Egypt and Arabia had made the old trade routes by way of the Red Sea and Syria unsafe, and the produce of India and China travelled by Central Asia and the Black Sea to Constantinople, whence it was distributed throughout Europe.

Constantinople owed much of her commercial superiority to

the enlightened trade policy of her emperors. Whilst Charlemagne was ruining the internal trade of his realm by tampering with the prices of produce, and ruining its foreign trade in order that his subjects might keep their money at home, the Byzantine emperors were discouraging monopoly, abolishing privileges, reducing duties and prohibiting courtiers from trading lest they might interfere with the profits of private enterprise.

Perceiving that commerce was the main source of national wealth, they proclaimed that any interference with its freedom was both a public and a private wrong. This enlightened trade policy of the Byzantine emperors and the natural advantages of Constantinople itself brought great gain to the empire, and gave the government ample funds for supporting the public burdens.

The extraordinary pre-eminence of Byzantium at this time is testified by the fact that Western Europe used its gold coinage. For hundreds of years the "bezant" or "byzant," a gold coin between the sovereign and the half-sovereign, was minted at Byzantium and circulated throughout Europe, the gold coinage of commerce. Even Asia received much of its currency from the same source. When the hoards of the Moslem conquerors of India fell into the hands of European invaders some centuries ago it was found that much of the treasure consisted of Byzantine coins. Where all this gold came from is a mystery. Probably there are rich gold mines in the Turkish Empire so long unworked that they have been lost sight of.

The wealth of the Byzantine emperors during those centuries enabled them to pay great attention to their military establishment. For this there was abundant need. The Bulgarian and Saracenic armies were not the undisciplined hordes some may imagine them to have been. In arms, discipline and artillery the Saracens were far advanced. Their horsemen were clad in chain armour, often exquisitely wrought, their Damascene blades were unrivalled. Their armies marched with catapults and other machines for besieging cities. The Bul-

garians were scarcely less formidable. Crumn's armies possessed every military engine known at the time, and his warriors were clad in steel.

Against these formidable foes the Byzantine armies held their own, and that so well that neither Saracen nor Bulgarian general cared to face Byzantine troops without considerable superiority of numbers.

The scientific attainments of the Byzantines were far from contemptible. Learning was cultivated not only in the capital but in the distant provinces, and schools of eminence had been founded in various parts of the empire. In the reign of Michael III. a new university was founded at Constantinople in which, in addition to the usual chairs of philosophy and literature, there were chairs of geometry and astronomy. Leo, a layman of high scientific attainment, was appointed president. He was a mathematician and inventor, several remarkable mechanical contrivances are accredited to him. Amongst other things he designed a system of signalling by which messages could be flashed from the frontiers from point to point until at last they were communicated to a dial placed in the imperial council chamber at Constantinople.

Though the moral tone of society in the Byzantine Empire was nothing to boast of, yet it was superior to that amongst the Franks and Saracens. Amongst the Saracens polygamy and concubinage were lawful institutions. The Franks were almost equally licentious. Charles Martel, Pepin and Charlemagne are said to have had two wives living at one time and many concubines. Charlemagne had no less than nine wives in succession. In Byzantium this sort of thing was counted disreputable. We have seen how when Constantine VI. divorced his wife and married another it nearly cost him his throne.

During the eighth and ninth centuries some progress was made in the Byzantine Empire towards the abolition of slavery. The cities were supplied with free emigrants, and it was considered disgraceful for a monk to own a slave.

The foundation of hospitals and charitable institutions both by the emperors and by private individuals testifies to the existence of a philanthropic spirit among the people.

The conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity in the middle of the ninth century, largely by the earnest ministry of two monks, Methodios and Kyrillos, is creditable to Byzantium. The men were imbued with a true missionary spirit, and deserved the success they achieved.

It is interesting to note that in 865 a new nation, the 865.
Russian, appeared in history. The foundation of the State which has grown into the Russian Empire was laid about this time by Scandinavian or Varangian warriors. Their chiefs having gained mastery over the basin of the Dneiper made a daring attack upon Constantinople. They could hardly have known what they were attempting, for they had only 4,000 men when they passed the Bosphorus. It required little exertion to put them to flight, but the wild daring of this unexpected enemy created much alarm.

CHAPTER VII.

A MACEDONIAN DYNASTY.

867. BASIL I.—Basil I. who now ascended the Byzantine throne is said to have been of humble origin. Little, however, is really known of his antecedents. Some say that his parents had been carried captive to Bulgaria by Crumn, and that he came south as a young man to seek his fortune. He was adopted by a wealthy lady as companion to her son, and when the son died, Basil became her heir.

Basil attracted the attention of a courtier, and afterwards of the emperor by his skill in horse-taming. He had that magnetic power which animals recognise, and which is generally allied with firmness of character. But as he was already the adopted son of one of the wealthiest ladies in the empire before Michael knew him, it is absurd to pretend that a mere groom was elevated to the throne.

Basil reigned for nineteen years, and founded a dynasty which held the Byzantine throne for two centuries. He himself was a hard-working and prudent monarch, and the empire flourished under his rule. Much of this prosperity arose from his attention to finance. Michael III. had been lavish in his later years, and the treasury was depleted; but Basil was careful, and thus replenished it without undue taxation. He also showed administrative gifts of a high order. His early life amongst the people helped him, for he understood their ways, and had some sympathy with their condition.

869. Basil made an effort to heal the breach with Rome, and secure the support of a certain party in Constantinople by setting Photius aside, and reinstating Ignatius as patriarch. He was on good terms with Photius, who probably acquiesced

in the arrangement. But Basil's concessions had little effect. The pope was only emboldened to increase his demands, and at last roused such antagonism in Byzantium that he alienated all. When, therefore, Ignatius died, Basil allowed things to take their course, and reinstated Photius. After this Photius remained patriarch until the reign of Leo VI. when he resigned. Photius was a man of ripe scholarship, and "one of the most dangerous opponents of papal ambition prior to the time of Luther" (Finlay, *Byz. Emp.*, bk. ii., ch. i.). 878.

Basil did some good legislative work. Justinian's great code had been published in Latin, and Greek was now the language of the people. Parts of Justinian's work had been translated, and we have seen how Leo the Isaurian published the *Eclogia*, a legal handbook, in Greek. Basil superseded the *Eclogia* by a manual called the *Procheiron*, and followed this later by a more comprehensive work, the *Revision of the Old Law*. This work was revised by his son Leo VI., and published as the *Basilika*. The *Basilika* remained the legal standard in Byzantium until the city was conquered by the Franks, and in Greece until that country was conquered by the Ottomans. We still possess it, though in an imperfect state. Basil also published an introductory legal manual, the *Epanagogé*.

Unfortunately the Byzantine theory of government was despotic. Arbitrary despotism, with its inevitable centralisation was the constitution of the empire. Ministers, senators, bishops, were alike of royal appointment. Worst of all municipal institutions were discouraged, and the spirit of self-help gradually waned before the spirit of centralisation.

Basil's reign was defiled by a continuation of the Paulician persecution. As we have had occasion to mention this sect more than once we may perhaps deal with it here somewhat more fully.

The Paulician Church originated in the seventh century in connection with the labours of an earnest New Testament student named Constantine, who suffered martyrdom. Sy-

meon, the imperial officer charged with his execution, attracted by the arguments and conduct of the Paulicians, was converted and became their leader in Constantine's stead. In their early days the Paulicians had views somewhat akin to those held now by members of the Society of Friends. They believed that Christ did not intend to perpetuate water-baptism, but that by baptism He meant the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit. They held that eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ consisted in coming into vital union with Him through His word. They objected to the worship of relics and to Mariolatry. They recognised no distinction between clergy and laity, and protested against the assumption of the Jewish priesthood by the Christian ministry. They highly commended the study of the Holy Scriptures by the laity, a practice which the priesthood at this time were beginning to discourage, finding that they best maintained their authority over the people when they were ignorant of the Scriptures.

The emperor Justinian II. had, at the instance of the bishop, persecuted the Paulicians and burned some of them alive. The bitterness of the persecution had driven many of them from their native land, and they had found refuge amongst the Saracens. Their condition afterwards depended largely upon the goodwill of the emperor. Leo the Isaurian had much sympathy with them, for like him they were strenuously opposed to image-worship. Nicephorus refused to be the tool of the hierarchy in the persecution of this good people, and during his reign they enjoyed tranquillity. Under Michael I. it was not so. At the instance of the patriarch of Constantinople, though against the will of many of the clergy, an effort was made to compel all Nonconformists to return to the Catholic Church.

842. Under the rule of Theodora the priests had it all their own way, and the work of conversion or extermination went on with fury. The persecution of the Paulicians was as fierce as that against the Albigenses and Waldenses at a later period. It is said that not less than 100,000 were slain by

the sword, beheaded, drowned, or impaled (Robertson, bk. iv., ch, viii.).

Among the Paulician victims was the father of Carbeas, an imperial officer. Exasperated at the murder of his father, Carbeas renounced allegiance to the empire, and with 5,000 sympathising followers took to the hills. They were eagerly befriended by the Saracens and their numbers were swelled by persecuted men of every sort. The purer doctrines of Paulicianism were lost sight of, and the refugees met sword with sword, sometimes forming the vanguard of Saracen invading armies.

The refugees had mostly concentrated in Melitene on the borders of Armenia, where they founded a small republic, their capital being Tephrike. Basil I. attacked them and destroyed 871.
many of their villages, but afterwards he met with a serious reverse at their hands and lost much of his army. At last the republicans were defeated, Tephrike was destroyed, many were slain, others escaped into Armenia.

The Paulicians of Asia did not die out. A century later we find the emperor John I. choosing them on account of their valour and inducing them to emigrate to the Balkans that they might increase the colonies of Paulicians and other Nonconformists already settled there and guard the northern frontier of the empire. Here under various names Protestantism survived, notwithstanding persecution.

In the twelfth century Bosnia became an asylum for the persecuted. When the work of extirpation in Languedoc and Provence, begun by Innocent III., was completed, his successors turned their attention to Bosnia and persuaded the brother of the king of Hungary to lead the crusade. Persecution went on for two centuries, the country was wasted, the cities were sacked, the heretics were burned. But they were not destroyed, for in the fifteenth century we find them making common cause with the Hussites. In that century 40,000 of them were driven into Herzegovina. A few years later the 1463.
Turkish conquest put an end to Christian persecution.

During Basil's reign the Asiatic Saracens did not seriously assail the empire. They were at war amongst themselves, and four caliphs were murdered at Bagdad in nine years. As a result they were weak, and the Byzantine boundary crept slowly eastward until new themes were created out of the added territory.

The Moslem corsairs continued to infest the Mediterranean. But Basil's fleets gained victories over them and crushed them for a time. He even recovered Cyprus for a few years. Basil's troops helped the Franks to recover Bari from the Saracens. They were very successful against the Saracens in Italy, and almost drove them quite out of the peninsula. But whilst this
878. was going on they neglected Sicily. During Basil's reign Syracuse fell and with it Sicily was practically lost, though Catania and some mountain forts held out for a time.

The Slavs did not now disturb the empire as they had done in former years. Many had settled down to lives of industry, and they had themselves to ward off attacks by invading northern tribes, of whom the Magyars were the most recent.

Such was the weakness of the surrounding nations at this time that had Basil or his immediate successors desired to seriously extend the boundaries of the empire they might have recovered most of the territory possessed by Justinian I. 300 years before. Fortunately they did not so desire. The recovery could only have been temporary at best; many years of retaliatory warfare would have followed, and in time the empire would have once more broken asunder. Fortunately for humanity Basil's son and grandson, who reigned between them for three-quarters of a century, were students not warriors, and were content with such things as they had.

886. LEO VI.—On the death of Basil, his son, Leo VI., ascended the throne. He was not a warrior, and the Saracens made various successful inroads into Asia Minor. But these did not materially affect the strength of the empire. In the Mediter-

ranean it was otherwise. The Saracens there carried on piracy on a large scale. The imperial navy had been neglected, and they took advantage of that fact to plunder the coast ports. The cities of Greece especially suffered. Encouraged by their success they attacked Thessalonica, the second city in the empire at this time, having a population of over 200,000 souls. It was sacked, and 20,000 were carried into captivity. These were first landed at Crete, where there was a slave mart, and thence they were dispersed over Asia and Africa.

Crete was at this time the centre of the slave trade, the most profitable branch of commerce in the Mediterranean. Leo made a vigorous effort to conquer the island and put an 912.
end to its nefarious practices. A powerful expedition was sent but it achieved nothing, being defeated with great loss. It is interesting to know that there were 700 Russian sailors in the fleet. In the last chapter we saw how the Russians were beginning to come forward as a nation.

The Bulgarians had been peaceful for some time. Their conversion from paganism to Christianity had been proceeding, and made them more friendly. One of the disputes between the pope and the patriarch in the reign of Michael III. was with reference to ecclesiastical control over the Bulgarian Church. The king of Bulgaria, fearing that the influence of the Byzantine clergy on his Christian subjects might end in the loss of independence, wished to place his Church under Latin control, and entered into correspondence with the pope on the subject. But the Byzantine government objected to this, for papal influence would certainly have been employed in a manner hostile to the Eastern Empire.

There was a flourishing trade with Bulgaria, for the Bulgarians were amongst the most civilised and commercial of the northern barbarians. Moreover, the trade between Byzantium and Northern Germany and Scandinavia passed through Bulgaria. Now we have already pointed out how the Byzantine emperors had generally discouraged monopoly and allowed trade to take its course. But Leo VI. foolishly de-

parted from this rule and allowed certain Greek merchants to obtain a monopoly of the Bulgarian trade. These men in their own interests so far interfered with it that they tried to remove the depôt from Constantinople to Thessalonica. Much dislocation of trade resulted, and the Bulgarian merchants were
893. seriously injured. Their king complained, and when Leo VI. refused to remedy the grievance he went to war. In the war the Byzantine troops were defeated, and Leo was glad to conclude a peace.

Leo had a high regard for the Sunday. As early as Constantine the Great a law had been passed commanding the suspension of business on that day, and Theodosius had legislated in the same direction. Leo went further, revoking exemptions, and forbidding even necessary agricultural work on the Sunday.

912. CONSTANTINE VII.—Leo died after reigning for twenty-five years, and was succeeded by his son. He was but a boy of six years, so Alexander, Leo's brother, acted as regent. But Alexander died in a year, and after that the government was nominally carried on by a council of regency. Really it was carried on by Zoe, Constantine's mother, who had been excluded from the council but soon obtained a large share of the power.

The council had at once to face a rebellion, led by Dukas, an Asiatic general. Dukas reached the capital and was proclaimed emperor by his partisans, but whilst fighting for possession of the palace was slain.

The council of regency did not rule very successfully. Simeon, the Bulgarian king, marched to the gates of Constan-
914. tinople almost unopposed. Next year he again came south and held Adrianople for a time. Zoe tried to check his ravages and sent an army and a fleet against him. There was disagreement between the leaders and they did not properly support one another, so that they were beaten. This roused so much
919. feeling in Constantinople that there was a revolution; Zoe

was compelled to retire; the council of regency was abolished, and Constantine assumed supreme power. The same year he married Helena, the daughter of Romanus Lecapenus, and took his father-in-law as colleague. This joint-ruler is therefore known as Romanus I.

Constantine VII. was a mild man, fond of quiet pursuits, and Romanus I. was ambitious, so that the latter had soon the larger share of power. He made three of his sons subordinate colleagues and made another patriarch. Constantine allowed himself to be pushed aside, and for nearly twenty-five years Romanus ruled as he liked. But he was hoist with his own petard. His eldest son died, and the two others conspired against their father and banished him. Indignant at this and having no love for the usurping family, the populace rose, deposed both the sons, and insisted on Constantine taking the reins of government.

Constantine, now about forty years of age, was an earnest 945.
student, and fonder of his books than of the business of State. He was proficient in science and art, a kind-hearted, gracious man. Works were written by him or under his supervision on agriculture, on veterinary medicine, and on historical and geographical subjects. Part of a historical encyclopædia has come down to us, enough to show that it must have been a valuable work; a geographical notice also of the administrative divisions of the empire. There is also an important treatise on the Byzantine government, abounding in information concerning the peoples on the frontier.

During Constantine's reign the empire flourished. The revenue was abundant, for the emperors had now for a long time refrained from the folly of foreign conquest. Over most of the empire the people prospered and were content. Doubtless there was over-centralisation and there was corruption in Byzantium, but its government compared favourably with the other governments of the time.

The Byzantines were the merchant princes of the world. Constantinople was still the centre of the world's commerce,

the place where East and West exchanged commodities. Her trading transactions extended to England in the West, to China in the East. The imperial coinage was the common medium of exchange among merchants. The Court of Constantinople was the first in Europe, and was visited by ambassadors from every civilised State.

959. ROMANUS II.—Constantine VII. was succeeded by his son Romanus II. He was twenty-one years of age, and reigned for four years only. He had his father's kindly disposition, but was fonder of sport than of books. During his short reign the administration was left largely in the hands of Joseph Bringas, a man of ability and worth.

Romanus had the good fortune to reconquer Crete. Other emperors had tried in vain. The conquest was greatly needed, for the Cretan corsairs enjoyed practical immunity and dominated the archipelago. The islands of the Ægean bought them off by the payment of tribute, and great injury was inflicted on the commerce of the Mediterranean by their depredations.

960. Romanus prepared an adequate expedition, and sent it under an admiral named Nicephorus Phocas. Chandax, the principal city of Crete, was blockaded, and though it stood out for a year it was captured in the end. The accumulated gains of years of systematic robbery were found there, and were divided among the troops. The conquest of the island was then completed, the fortifications of Chandax were destroyed, and a new fortress was built and garrisoned by Byzantine troops. The Saracens were either enslaved or expelled, and missionary monks were introduced among the people to win them back to Christianity.

The destruction of this pirate's nest was a blessing to the whole empire, but more especially to Greece. This country, which in the seventh century had been very desolate, was now prosperous. The population had increased, new cities had sprung up, agriculture was thriving. Greece had a practical monopoly of the finest kinds of wine, oil, and fruit. Thebes

and Athens were famous for their silk. The Greeks were enterprising, and, aided by Byzantine capital, had become great traders. Much of the commerce of the Mediterranean was in their hands. From the ninth century onwards for at least 300 years Greece was a rich and flourishing province.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOUSE OF BASIL.

963. ROMANUS II. died prematurely, leaving a young wife and two children, Basil aged seven and Constantine only two. Theophano his widow acted as regent, Joseph Bringas was chief minister of state, and Nicephorus Phocas, the general who was so successful in Crete, commanded the army in Asia.

The triumphs of Nicephorus had made him popular, and he found little difficulty in displacing Bringas and becoming guardian of the young emperors. As they were so very young, he was crowned as their colleague, and confirmed his position by marrying Theophano their mother.

963. NICEPHORUS II.—The joint-reign of Nicephorus and Basil lasted for six years. Nicephorus was a good man and an excellent soldier, but he was a poor administrator, and his reign was not successful.

The fiscal measures of the emperor were badly conceived. They worried the people without filling the treasury. The government paid their debts in debased coinage, and demanded payment of taxes in pure coin. This lapse from straight dealing was unpardonable, considering the position that the Byzantine coinage had maintained in the commercial world.

With the ecclesiastics Nicephorus had many disputes. Sometimes he had right upon his side, as when he tried to check the founding of monasteries, and the donating of land to the Church by deathbed gifts. Sometimes he was wrong, as when he demanded that soldiers who perished in war against the Saracen should be recognised as Christian martyrs. In this matter the patriarch showed commendable firmness,

and an enlightenment which we would hardly have expected to find. He declared that Christianity and war had nothing in common, and that it was contrary to the spirit of Christianity to slay any one, even an enemy.

Nicephorus offended the people by suppressing as far as he could the extravagant sports and shows to which they had become accustomed.

With the soldiers Nicephorus was extremely popular, and as a general he was successful. He endeavoured to complete the conquest of Cilicia and Northern Syria, and captured various important cities. His general Nicetas reconquered Cyprus from the Saracens. But when he invaded Sicily, hoping to wrest it also from them, his expedition was annihilated.

During this reign Luitprand, bishop of Cremona, visited Constantinople as ambassador from Otto I., the Western emperor, to negotiate a marriage between his son, afterwards Otto II. and Theophano, step-daughter of Nicephorus. Otto hoped that Nicephorus would be so pleased with the union that he would give Southern Italy with his step-daughter as a marriage portion. But the emperor with commendable pride demanded that the prince should rather pay for the honour of the alliance with his house. The negotiation accordingly failed at that time, but afterwards a marriage treaty was concluded, and the nuptials were celebrated at Rome.

Luitprand was a historian, and he has left a record of the impression made upon him by the wonders of Constantinople. He was greatly astonished at what he saw there. It was still the greatest city in the world, and was not only famous because of its architecture and commerce, but also for its municipal government and philanthropic institutions. It anticipated much that we look upon as quite modern. Even more than a century later, when it had somewhat decayed, it amazed the Crusaders who were accustomed to the squalor which then prevailed in western cities.

Nicephorus was a worthy emperor, but he was stern and

he alienated many. His wife was unfaithful to him and conspired with her lover John Zimisces, a cavalry officer. The conspiracy was successful, the emperor was murdered and John Zimisces reigned in his stead.

969. JOHN I.—Revolution was now accomplished at Byzantium with less bloodshed than in the olden time. Nicephorus had been content to share his rule with the boy princes, and John did the same. In fact he married Theodora, their sister, and thus became one of the family. Theophano, the dowager-empress who had connived at the murder of her husband for his sake, was deposed and exiled.

During John's reign there was war with the Russians.
865. We have seen how this new nation, inspired if not founded by Scandinavian warriors, made a gallant but unsuccessful attack upon Constantinople in the ninth century. The further advance of the Russians was checked for a time by the warlike tribes who inhabited the basin of the Don, but by degrees they amalgamated with these, and became one people.

907. In the tenth century a Russian fleet approached the Bosphorus, and the crews landing made a raid from which they
941. gained much spoil. Forty years later the Byzantines had their revenge, destroying an expedition commanded by the Russian king which was ravaging the coasts of Thrace and Bithynia. The chronicler represents them as explaining their defeat by saying: "The Greeks have a fire like lightning, and this is the reason why they have conquered us".

The Russians were not only fighters but also traders. Their merchants settled in Cherson, a thriving and almost independent city in the Crimea, and also in Constantinople. The Byzantine emperors were quick to recognise the excellence of the Russians as mercenaries, and used them in various expeditions against Sicily, Southern Italy and Crete.

945. In the middle of the tenth century Olga was queen of the Russians. She went to Constantinople and was baptised as a Christian. But she was not able to convert Sviatoslav, her son.

When he reigned he invaded Bulgaria and subdued it. He then 968.
tried conclusions with Byzantium, but was overthrown by John I. at Presthlava and Dorystolum (Silistria). As he was returning with his defeated army and crossing territory belonging to the Pechenègs, a Mongolian people inhabiting the basin of the Don, his army fell into an ambush and he was slain. Thus relieved of a dangerous foe, John I. now pushed the Byzantine arms northward, and the Danube became once more the boundary of the empire.

Whilst the Russian campaigns were in progress the Byzantine armies were engaged also in Syria, where the Saracens had recovered much of the territory won by Nicephorus. Such 973.
was their success there that the caliph was driven to proclaim a general Moslem levy. John I. commanded the Byzantine troops in person, and was cut off by death in the midst of his conquests.

BASIL II.—Basil, the eldest son of Romanus II., was now 976.
twenty years of age. He had been nominally joint-ruler with Nicephorus and John Zimisces, and now carried on the administration by himself. He was an unscrupulous and a brutal man. He was adventurous enough, and carried the Byzantine flag over a great extent of territory. But his conquests resulted in no permanent gain either to humanity or to the empire. They merely meant vast expenditure of treasure and human life.

John I. had pushed the Byzantine frontier to the Danube, but his conquest of Bulgaria had been superficial. The Bulgarians and Slavs had blended into one nation, and under a king named Samuel strove for independence. Basil attacked 981.
them but was defeated, and for some years they remained independent. Unfortunately their king waxed confident, and attacked his neighbours. He even invaded Greece and overran Peloponnesus. But he overreached himself, and in retiring his 996.
army was almost annihilated.

Basil took advantage of Samuel's weakness and invaded 1000.

Bulgaria. Having great resources at his command he laid his plans with extreme care, conquering the country pass by pass, castle by castle, until he reached the centre of Bulgarian power. Samuel took refuge in the mountains, but the Byzantine generals carried on the struggle year after year, ever narrowing the area of his influence. At last they were ready for the final effort. Samuel's position seemed impregnable, but Basil's armies attacked him on every side. The Bulgarian army was routed and 15,000 captives were taken. With a brutality which it would be hard to parallel in history, Basil blinded his prisoners, sparing only one man in a hundred to lead the others home. When their king met the ghastly company and saw what had been done, he fell senseless to the ground and died.

The result of Basil's brutality was what might have been expected. The Bulgarians were maddened, and much of the work of conquest had to be done over again. A new leader, John Ladislas, was found, and the fighting went on. But the Bulgarians were not strong enough to resist the Byzantine
1018. armies successfully, and when Ladislas died they submitted for a time.

Basil now turned his attention to the East. Following the evil example of ancient monarchs, he transported whole tribes from their homes to other portions of the empire. Many Bulgarians and Slavonians were carried into Armenia, and many Armenians into Bulgaria. The only result was to plant communities of discontented people in various sections of the empire; nothing was added to its strength by the process.

1021. Basil also attacked parts of Armenia which had hitherto maintained their independence. Here also he was for the moment successful. But the measure of his success was the measure of his ultimate failure. In weakening Armenia he weakened a country which might have been a splendid barrier against the Turkish tribes, who now began to alarm the East and were destined soon to give the empire trouble enough.

The emperor was preparing an expedition against Sicily

when he died. He died at the age of sixty-eight, and had been nominally an emperor for sixty-two years. He had reigned actively for nearly half a century. He enlarged the empire but greatly reduced its power of resistance.

CONSTANTINE VIII.—Constantine, the youngest son of Romanus, was now sole emperor. He had been joint-emperor for more than sixty years, but had taken no part in administration. At sixty-four he was too old to change his habits, so he left affairs of government to others. He had no son, but his three daughters were capable women. The eldest was in a convent; the second, Zoe, was forty-eight years of age; Theodora was the youngest. On his deathbed Constantine chose Zoe as his successor, and espoused her to a noble named Romanus Argyrus, who put away his former wife at the royal command. 1025.

ROMANUS III. AND ZOE.—Zoe reigned jointly with Romanus III. for five years. In all she reigned for twenty-six years, and she had during that time four consorts. We must not disparage her on that account. There was a strong prejudice amongst the Byzantines against the imperial rule of a woman. It will be remembered that two centuries before when Charlemagne was crowned emperor in Rome, the excuse was made that there was no emperor at Byzantium, the throne having been usurped by a woman. Both prejudice and convenience, therefore, made it desirable that there should be a male on the throne. 1028.

During the reign of Romanus, Maniakes, a Byzantine general, captured Edessa. Before the Saracens abandoned the city they burned much of it. But they left behind a relic of extraordinary interest, purporting to be a letter written by our Saviour to Abgarus, king of Edessa. The relic had been treasured in the church there for centuries and was transmitted by Maniakes to Constantinople. 1032.

The story of the letter is narrated by Eusebius, who says

that king Abgarus of Edessa was suffering from an incurable disease, and, hearing of the miracles wrought by Jesus, he sent a courier of the name of Ananias to Jerusalem with a letter to invite Him to come to Edessa. In the letter he justifies his invitation partly by his desire to be cured, partly by his intention to afford Jesus a place of refuge against the persecution of the Jews. In his answer Our Lord blessed Abgarus because he had shown his faith in Him without having seen Him. He said that He could not come on account of the necessary duties devolving upon Him; but promised that after His ascension He would send one of His disciples, who would free him from his sufferings and give life to him and his people (Smith, *Dict. Christ. Biog.*).

Fragments of papyrus were found in the Fayum province in Egypt which proved to be a Greek version of this correspondence. They are kept with much care in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, where visitors are permitted to inspect them through glass.

The genuineness of the correspondence has of course been much disputed, and was disputed in the early Church. As a rule Catholic writers have maintained its genuineness, whilst most Protestants have declared against it. The fragments are ascribed by Mr. Wallace Lindsay to the fourth or fifth century. Whether genuine or not, the story and the fragments are, therefore, ancient and interesting.

1034. MICHAEL IV. AND ZOE.—When Romanus died, Zoe took as her consort Michael the Paphlagonian. He was a handsome young man, but suffered from epilepsy, and during his reign of seven years he left matters very much in the hands of his brother John, whose fiscal methods created great dissatisfaction and did much mischief throughout the empire.

During this reign a determined effort was made by the Byzantines to reconquer Sicily. Maniakes, the general already mentioned, led an expedition, and had Norman mercenaries amongst his troops. He was successful, but being suspected

of treason was recalled, after which his conquests were quickly lost.

MICHAEL V. AND ZOE.—When Michael IV. died Zoe would willingly have ruled alone, but there was so much aversion to purely female sway that she adopted a son, who became colleague as Michael V. He proved to be a scoundrel, and tried to thrust his benefactress from her throne. But the people were loyal to their queen, and he was deposed. For a few months then Zoe and Theodora ruled jointly, but this did not succeed, and a fourth consort was chosen. 1041.

CONSTANTINE IX. AND ZOE.—Zoe's choice fell upon a noble named Constantine Monomachus, and he reigned for twelve years, outliving Zoe. They were years of disaster, but for this neither emperor nor empress was altogether responsible. New powers were coming to the front, in Europe the Normans, in Asia the Seljuk Turks, and these were powers against which even the most competent of emperors would have found it hard to strive. 1042.

Constantine IX. made, however, serious mistakes. The frontier provinces in the East had been exempt from direct taxation on condition of their maintaining a permanent militia for the defence of the frontiers. Constantine having a depleted treasury permitted the provinces to compound for military service by money payment. Thus the troops on the Asiatic frontier were disbanded at one of the most critical periods in the history of the empire.

In a dispute with the Russians Constantine showed to greater advantage. The Russians were now well to the front as traders, and some of them were established as merchants in Constantinople. A merchant of position was killed in a street riot, and the Russians demanded satisfaction. Constantine offered reasonable satisfaction, but their demands were exorbitant and had to be resisted. They sent an expedition, and a battle ensued in which the Russians were defeated. A violent 1043.

storm increased their discomfiture. Afterwards peace was established and trade placed upon its old footing. From this period for a long time peace was maintained between the empire and the Russians. The fact that the Russians united theologically with the Greek Church in opposition to the Roman increased the friendship.

1048. The Pechenegs, a people dwelling between the Dneiper and the Danube, invaded Bulgaria. The Byzantine troops defeated them so severely that they had to surrender at discretion. Constantine divided up their army. The more active he enlisted and sent to the Armenian frontier to face the Seljuk Turks; the rest he established as agricultural colonists on waste lands near Sardica and Naissos.

But home is sweet even to the barbarian. When the Pecheneg troops reached Asia they mutinied and returned quickly under their own officers to the Bosphorus. They crossed safely, and by forced marches reached the Danube, having been joined by their agricultural comrades on the way. They routed such Byzantine forces as were sent against them, and at length concluded an honourable treaty for thirty years.

Byzantine lost during this reign any hold upon Italy it had retained. This was inevitable as soon as the Normans, who at first served as mercenaries, began to fight for their own hand. The Byzantine troops were defeated, the emperor of Germany was baffled, the pope was taken prisoner by these
1055. formidable foes. With the capture of Otranto by the Normans under Robert Guiscard, Greek authority in Italy came to an end.

It was in the end of this reign that the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches became final. Various attempts had been made to heal the breach, but they came to nought. Michael Cærularius, patriarch of Constantinople, now abolished the use of the Latin liturgy in certain Bulgarian churches and monasteries, and wrote letters to the Latin bishop protesting against such of their practices as he deemed erroneous. The pope took umbrage, and his ambassadors left a bull of excom-

munication signed by him upon the altar of St. Sophia. The patriarch replied by excommunicating the pope, and was supported in his action by the Greek clergy.

Zoe died in 1050, aged seventy, and Constantine died four years later. After his death Theodora, the last surviving 1054.
daughter of Basil II., became empress. Though aged she was full of energy. She presided in senate and council, heard judicial appeals, and paid personal attention to the work of administration. Her reign was peaceful, and she died at the age of seventy-six. With Theodora the race of Basil the Mace- 1057.
donian became extinct.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SELJUKIAN TURK.

1057. SEVEN centuries have passed since Constantinople became the capital of the Eastern Empire, and we are approaching an exceedingly important epoch in its history. It is hard to realise that, at a time when this great city was already waxing old, England had only begun her national existence. Yet the Basilian dynasty, which held possession of the Byzantine throne with so much distinction for two hundred years, came to an end with the death of Theodora nine years before the Norman Conquest. At the time we have now reached Edward the Confessor was reigning in England, Godwin was dead, Harold was earl of Wessex. The land was in a very disunited state and its future looked far from bright. London was a busy trading town in a small way; other English cities were little more than country towns.

France was not much further advanced than England. The Carlovingian dynasty had terminated; the house of Capet was on the throne. The land was covered with castles, the king had little power, every lord did what was right in his own eyes. Municipal life was discouraged, and trading on anything but a petty scale was impossible. In feudal times the theory of protection was carried to its logical issue. Town protected itself against town, manor against manor. There was little exchange of commodities either permitted or possible. As a result the people in Western Europe were wretchedly poor, even the highest classes lived in the rudest and roughest way.

In the Byzantine Empire this was not so. Many centuries of civilisation and the free interchange of commodities had pro-

duced wealth, and the regular administration of justice permitted the wealth to accumulate. It is true that the Byzantine empire had often been raided, and that certain provinces had suffered terribly from war. But now for some centuries the empire had been remarkably free from these calamities; and when we reflect how much difference even one busy century has made in our own land we can realise what two centuries of peaceful trading must have meant to Byzantium.

The city of Constantinople stood alone, the unrivalled mart of Europe, supplying Western and Northern Europe with the produce of the East. But though the greatest city of the empire it was by no means the only city of importance. Athens, Thebes, Thessalonica, and very many other cities were important, each of them in its own way.

The Byzantine government was doubtless imperfect: there must have been corruption: there must have been waste. Yet it was superior to any other European government of that day. There was over-centralisation; the emperor was absolute in the capital and far more absolute in the provinces than was good for them. This prevented that natural development which builds up a strong people, and matters were neglected in the more remote parts of the empire which would have been attended to had its sections been permitted to attend to their own affairs. Moreover, money gathered in the provinces was too often wasted in the capital upon unnecessary display. All this would be keenly felt when the empire fell upon hard times. But at the time which we have now reached there was widespread wealth and contentment.

Wealth was not the only advantage possessed by the Byzantine Empire over its contemporaries. In Western Europe feudalism was the rule, and the populations consisted mainly of nobles, priests, and serfs. In the Byzantine Empire it was not so. Centuries of manufacturing industry and prosperous trading had led to the development of a thriving middle class. Compared with the feudal nobility of the West the Byzantine territorial magnates may have appeared of little account. But

this was all to the advantage of the common people. Wherever the empire had rest from war the common people throve, and that contentment which is born of prosperity made them yield a more willing submission to the central power.

The wealth of the Byzantine emperors at this time made it more easy for them to pay for the services of foreign mercenaries, and some of the best soldiers in Europe fought in their armies. Harold Hardrada, the king of Norway, who was slain at Stamford Bridge the year of the Norman Conquest, had been a captain in the Imperial Guard at Constantinople.

It is well to remember these things because we are now approaching the time when the Byzantine Empire comes into contact with the forces destined for its overthrow—the Crusader and the Turk. Not long after this we shall find the Western nations beginning to interfere in Eastern affairs and arrogating to themselves a superiority over Byzantium to which they had no title, but which posterity has yielded them almost without question. Tested by almost any conceivable standard, by the wealth and comfort of its people, by the character of its government, by its industry, its commerce, its Christianity, its military prowess, its extraordinary history, the Byzantine Empire was far superior to anything that the West could show. Byzantium fell, it is true, and from this circumstance it is easy to assume its inferiority, and to argue that it must have been rotten at the core. But this does not follow. Since the world began we know not of any empire that has made a better struggle for its existence. After centuries of effort Byzantium was destroyed by the united forces of Europe and of Asia; crushed between the upper and the nether millstone.

It must be confessed that the interference of the Western nations with Eastern affairs was undertaken in the first instance at the solicitation of an Eastern emperor. But little did he imagine what his unfortunate request would bring forth. The strange character of the crusading armies, the

gross ignorance, yet insufferable pride of their leaders, the utterly irreligious behaviour of men who professed to be fighting in the cause of religion, the worthless character of the States which they endeavoured to found, their want of culture and evident ignorance of the most elementary principles of scientific government filled the subjects of the Byzantine Empire with amazement, and caused them to regard the Western Christians for many ages with hatred and contempt.

If Byzantium had enemies in Europe she had enemies in Asia not less dangerous. We have already seen how for a long time the Turkish or Mongol tribes of Central Asia had troubled Europe. Huns, Magyars, Bulgarians, Hungarians, and many others had followed in succession. In the end of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh the tribes inhabiting the region now known as Independent Tartary or Turkestan broke through their borders and spread on every side. All Asia was a prey to Turkish invasion. As far east as Pekin a Tartar kingdom was established. In Afghanistan and India, Mahmoud of Ghazni set up a Turkish State, whilst Turks of the house of Seljuk threatened Western Asia.

The Turkish tribes had embraced Mohammedanism, but are to be distinguished from the earlier followers of the prophet. The Arabs had never been the sworn enemies of civilisation. Thousands of years ago the plains of Chaldea and Arabia produced wise men. The gloriously clear sky gave unsurpassable opportunity for studying the heavenly bodies, and the Arabs were always famous for their astronomical knowledge. Abraham came from Chaldea; the writer of the book of Job, the oldest book in the Bible, unique in the beauty of its poetry and the daring of its imagery, was probably an Arabian prince.

For some centuries after the death of Mohammed, when the wild frenzy of the early conquest had passed and the caliphs settled down to the task of government, Islam affected and patronised culture. The caliphs had much wealth at their disposal and they patronised literature and science. Universi-

ties were established at Bagdad, Cordova, and Cairo. The last had 12,000 students. The Arabs had a science of medicine and made many discoveries in chemistry. Their surgeons performed extremely difficult operations, and are said to have used anæsthetics. Arab mathematicians created algebra. They invented the pendulum, built observatories, and constructed astronomical instruments which are still in use.

The dominions of the caliphs were well governed on the whole. Taxation was not excessive, roads, canals, and aqueducts were kept in repair, and postal arrangements were established throughout. Cities sprang up or increased in size, and Moslem mosques and palaces were built in a style of architecture which commands admiration even to the present day.

So long, therefore, as Arab influence was the ruling force in Islam, civilisation was comparatively safe. Unfortunately the Arab had to give way to the Turk, a being who cared for neither the necessities nor luxuries of civilised life, but destroyed culture wherever he found it. And in Islam the Turkish type prevailed.

In the eighth century the capital of the Moslem Empire was removed to Bagdad. The caliphate of Bagdad reached its zenith about 800 A.D., when Haroun al Raschid was ruler. But so wide an empire as the Moslem had now become could not be ruled from one city. Accordingly, in the course of time, other caliphates were established, the most important being at Cairo in Egypt, and at Cordova in Spain. Moreover, the provincial governors often made themselves independent of the caliph and ruled as kings. In Asia, Khorasan, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Syria had thus detached themselves.

This was the divided condition of affairs amongst the Moslems at the time when the Turks were swarming down from their inclement homes in Central Asia, and establishing themselves in the fairer provinces of Northern Syria on the borders of the Byzantine Empire. The caliphs, unable to conquer them, diverted their energies, employing them as

mercenaries and permitting them to keep whatever Christian territory they could seize. Gradually, therefore, the marches on the Byzantine and Moslem borders became peopled with Turks acting under their own chiefs, and petty States began to spring up. The Seljuk Turks, in particular, crossed the Oxus, conquered Khorasan, and dominated various provinces. The caliph of Bagdad, unable to grapple with them, invited 1058.
their chief, Togrul Beg, to his capital and resigned his temporal authority into his hands, remaining merely a religious officer. Under Togrul Beg and his successors the power of the Seljukian Turks increased continually, and the Byzantine emperors had to deal with a foe more dangerous than any they had yet encountered.

MICHAEL VI.—Theodora on her death-bed nominated Mi- 1057.
chael Stratioticus as her successor. He was a contemporary of her own, a man who had had his day, far too old to become an emperor. His accession therefore was merely the signal for rebellion. In less than a year the nobles conspired to overthrow him, and Isaac Comnenus, a popular general in the Asiatic army, was proclaimed in his stead.

ISAAC I.—The choice of the Byzantine nobles was unfortu- 1057.
nate. When Isaac had ruled but one year he was stricken down by a mortal disease and retired to a monastery to die.

CONSTANTINE X.—Constantine Ducas now ascended the 1059.
throne. He had been an excellent official, but proved a poor emperor, incapable of grappling with the difficulties Byzantium had now to face. Though terrible danger was at this moment impending over the empire, Constantine disbanded part of the army and cut down the pay of the rest. Possessed by an injudicious spirit of economy, he neglected to supply the troops with stores, and left the forts on the frontier unrepaired. Thus encouraged, the Seljukian Turks pressed forward, and during this reign they first became a serious menace to the empire.

The policy of Constantine X. in Armenia was specially unwise. Togrul Beg was pressing the Armenians hard, but these independent mountaineers were not easily conquered and a little encouragement and practical help might have enabled them to successfully resist the Turkish advance. Instead of sending this help Constantine actually chose this time to send ecclesiastical envoys to effect a union between the Greek and Armenian Churches. When the Armenian Christians declined the religious union, he left them politically to their fate. The result was that Alp Arslan, the nephew and successor of To-
1064. grul Beg, subjugated Armenia and captured Ani the ancient capital. The Seljukians now had no obstacle lying between them and the empire, and their invasions became incessant. Their raiding was of no ordinary type, for they were not content with plunder, but slew all capable of bearing arms and carried the rest of the people into captivity. Villages and farmhouses were burned down, and even wells were filled up by these monsters. Their object seemed to be to exterminate the native population in order that they might afterwards fill the unoccupied lands with their own people.

Constantine was succeeded by his son Michael VII., a boy of fourteen, the empress Eudocia acting as regent. Eudocia took as second husband an Asiatic noble, Romanus Diogenes, who became joint ruler with his step-son.

1067. ROMANUS IV.— Romanus was a good soldier and an honourable man. He at once took the field against the Seljukians, and when he could persuade them to fight with him he generally defeated them. But it was not easy to hunt them down. They raided the country in scattered bands, attacking many places at once and eluding pursuers. Cappadocia was little better than a desert, Cæsarea had been captured, and the Turks were raiding Phrygia.

1071. In 1071 the Sultan besieged and captured Manzikert, a town on the Armenian frontier, and early next spring Romanus endeavoured to recover it. As the Sultan was for

the moment in Persia, Romanus ventured to divide his army, hoping to gain possession of Akhlat, another important place. Unfortunately Alp Arslan returned quickly from Persia, and Romanus, with reduced forces, found himself confronted by the entire Seljukian power. For a whole day the battle was fiercely contested, but bad tactics and treachery at last gave the victory to the Turks. The Byzantine army was routed, and Romanus was wounded and made a prisoner.

Alp Arslan treated Romanus with consideration and allowed him to return to Constantinople after some months on promise of ransom. But when he reached his capital it was to find that there had been a revolution, that he had been dethroned, and that Eudocia had been exiled. A few days later his eyes were put out and so carelessly that he died. Before his death, however, he had gathered together as much money as he could and had sent it to Alp Arslan to show that the failure to observe the conditions of his release did not lie with him.

MICHAEL VII.—Michael now reigned alone, and the Sel- 1071.
jukian Turks, encouraged by the weakness of the empire, fell upon its provinces with new vigour. Alp Arslan fell by the dagger of an assassin, but his successors ravaged Asia Minor without mercy. Meanwhile the empire was weakened by civil war, many provinces revolted, and within a few years there were no less than six pretenders to the throne. Michael at length obtained peace from the Turks by surrendering to Suleiman, the general of Malek Shah, Alp Arslan's successor, all the imperial provinces which had come into his possession. These covered the greater part of Asia Minor. Suleiman established his capital at Nicæa and soon became an independent prince. Asia Minor now became known to the Moslems as Roum, and thus began the independent power of the Sultans of Roum, a power which lasted for 130 years.

Michael VII. was the first Byzantine emperor to appeal to Western Europe for help against the Turk. He entered into communication with Hildebrand, ostensibly with the object of

uniting the Greek and Latin Churches, but really in the hope of obtaining succour against the Turks. Hildebrand would gladly have led a crusade, but the state of Europe at that time made it impossible, and when the Greeks themselves found that they could only have his help on condition of acknowledging his supremacy, they refused it at such a price. Thus the first effort to arouse the crusading spirit failed, and it was an untold misfortune for Byzantium that it was ever revived.

1078. NICEPHORUS III.— The reign of Michael VII. gave no satisfaction to the people, and he became extremely unpopular. At length he was overthrown and succeeded by Nicephorus III. Nicephorus was equally unworthy of his high position, and there were many revolts. Though he reigned but three years, no less than four rebels assumed the imperial title, and he was only kept on the throne by the ability of Alexius Comnenus, his commander-in-chief. At length the incapacity of Nicephorus became so evident that Alexius himself rebelled and was proclaimed emperor by the army. He advanced upon Constantinople, obtained admission through the connivance of
1081. German mercenaries, and captured it. Nicephorus retired to a monastery, and Alexius Comnenus reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER X.

ALEXIUS I.

ALEXIUS now sat upon the Imperial throne. One member of his family had occupied the throne for a short time twenty years before, but under Alexius the Comnenian dynasty was established and it ruled the empire for a century. 1081.

Anna Comnena, the daughter of Alexius, wrote an account of his life, and the work is interesting and valuable. Though meant to praise, the biography does not leave a favourable impression on the mind with regard to the character of Alexius. But this may partly arise from the warped judgment of the biographer. Much allowance must be made for Alexius. He filled an extremely difficult position at a most difficult time. To his credit it must be recorded that he saved the empire from what seemed almost inevitable destruction, and passed it on to his successor much stronger than he found it.

When Alexius seized the throne there were residing in the capital two deposed emperors and four emperor's sons. There was therefore much fuel for conspiracy, and for some years conspiracy and rebellion abounded. Many emperors would have tried to solve at least one part of the problem by the execution of their rivals, and it speaks well for the kindly character of Alexius that he permitted them to live unharmed. He dealt successfully with the rebellions, and when the crusades brought the citizens of the empire face to face with a common danger the rebellions ceased.

At the beginning of his reign Alexius had to encounter serious trouble from the West. The Normans had been making great progress in Europe. Northern France had long been under their control, and they had acquired a good deal of Italy.

Just fifteen years before the accession of Alexius, Duke William of Normandy had crossed the English Channel with a band of adventurers and won a kingdom for himself. His success inflamed the ambition of other Normans, amongst whom was Robert Guiscard, the duke of Apulia. Observing the unsettled state of the succession in Constantinople, Guiscard determined to follow the example of William of Normandy and find a kingdom for himself. He thought he might have at least a portion of the Byzantine, and like William he obtained the papal blessing upon his enterprise and was presented with a sacred banner.

Guiscard sailed from Brindisi with 150 ships and 30,000 men, gained Corfu, seized some Illyrian ports, and besieged Durazzo. Alexius, who had only just ascended the throne, raised an army and marched to the relief of the city. The Venetians, fearing that a Norman power at the mouth of the Adriatic would be fatal to their trade with the Levant, sent a fleet to his assistance. Their fleet scattered the Norman ships and separated Robert Guiscard from his base. But he only pressed the siege of Durazzo with greater vigour.

Durazzo was splendidly defended by Paleologos, and Guiscard's efforts seemed likely to end in failure. But Alexius approached, and, eager to distinguish himself thus early in his reign, precipitated an engagement. The battle was conducted by the emperor with little skill; he was defeated, and a few months later the city fell. But difficulties arose in Italy and Guiscard had to return, leaving his son Bohemond in his place. Bohemond was an able leader, and, for a time, Alexius made little progress against him. The imperial troops were again defeated, and Bohemond overran Epirus and invaded Macedonia. But Alexius had learned wisdom; he avoided pitched battles, and wore out the Normans in petty engage-
1084. ments. The policy was successful, and, at last, aided by Turkish cavalry, he was victorious at Larissa, and Bohemond returned to Italy. Next year Guiscard died, and the dread of a Norman invasion passed away.

During his contest with Robert Guiscard and Bohemond, Alexius was willing to buy peace from the Seljukian Turks at almost any price. Accordingly he acquiesced in the arrangement made by Michael VII. which permitted the sultan of Roum to keep possession of the greater part of Asia Minor and to have his capital at Nicæa, less than a hundred miles from Constantinople. The Seljukians had done infinite mischief to the empire. The rich agricultural districts of Asia Minor, long a fruitful source of revenue, had been torn away. The Greek cultivators had been exterminated, and nomadic Turkish tribes had taken their place. Suleiman died, but other warlike 1086.
chiefs succeeded. Northward the Turks were checked by the Bosphorus, but southward their power extended to Antioch. Palestine had been under Moslem rule for centuries.

The struggle with Robert Guiscard taught the Eastern Empire the value of the Norman as a warrior, and Alexius conceived the idea of enlisting a Norman force, and recovering by its aid some of the provinces of which the empire had been despoiled. Often in the history of the world have nations thus sought help against their foes, and rarely has the experiment been successful. Too often the men who came to aid have remained to conquer. Had Alexius realised what Norman intervention in the affairs of his empire would mean he would have preferred to fight his own battles. For Norman intervention brought about the crusades, and the crusades brought about the destruction of Byzantium. But in order that we may clearly understand how these things came to pass we must for a moment diverge.

In another part of this volume we have dealt fully with the story of the crusades. Here it is only necessary to say as much as is required for the sake of the continuity of the narrative. Let us remind our readers, therefore, that the crusades, though connected to some extent with the needs of the Byzantine Empire, were primarily connected with the question of pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In another place we have seen how the custom of making pilgrimage to the

Holy Land began seriously to develop in the fourth century, after the pretended discovery of the true cross by the empress Helena, and the building by her and Constantine of churches on the traditional sites of our Lord's birth and burial. As the century advanced the practice increased. Jerome, when he left Rome a disappointed man, went to Bethlehem and built there a monastery, convent, church, and hospice. Pilgrimages to the holy places were then becoming common.

Whilst the Roman Empire was strong, pilgrimage was easy. Even when Islam became powerful and Jerusalem fell into Moslem hands, pilgrims were not interfered with. The mosque of Omar was built on the site of the temple, but the other sacred places were treated with respect and left in Christian hands. The Arabs were themselves enthusiastic pilgrims, and they respected holy places and holy men. Moreover, as avowed descendants of Abraham they revered Jerusalem, and they knew that Mohammed had acknowledged Christ as a prophet second only to himself.

In the tenth century the caliphate broke up and pilgrimage became more dangerous, the safety of the pilgrims depending upon the character of the possessors of Jerusalem for the time being. When the Fatimite caliphs had control of Palestine pilgrimage was generally easy, though one mad caliph, El Hakim, made it dangerous for a time. The advent of the Seljukian Turk made pilgrimage almost impossible. To the Turk nothing was sacred.

We have seen how Michael VII., seeing the Turk at his
1074. gates, corresponded with Gregory VII. on the subject, but without result.

1086. Some years later Pope Victor III. advocated a crusade and promised remission of sins to all who took part in it. The Genoese and Pisans responded and swept the coast of Africa with pirate fleets. But this was the only result.

There are in existence copies of a letter purporting to be from Alexius I. to Robert the count of Flanders, declaring that the Turks were supreme from Jerusalem to the Ægean,

that their galleys swept the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and that they threatened the imperial city itself.

At a synod held at Piacenza an embassy from Alexius 1095.
appealed for help against the Turk, and Pope Urban II. countenanced the appeal. At a second council, held at Clermont in France the same year, it was declared that, "whoever should set out for Jerusalem, not for the sake of honour or gain, but to free the Church of God, might reckon his journey as a penance".

After the council at Clermont, Urban harangued the people in the open air. He said little or nothing about Byzantium, to whose sorrows the Westerns were indifferent. He said a great deal about the defilement of the holy city and the deliverance of the sacred places from the Turk. The effect of his appeal was tremendous. Thousands volunteered, and crosses torn out of red cloth were given to all who would take them. Men, women, and children eagerly pledged themselves to march to the Holy Land, certainly not one in a thousand having any real idea of what their pledge involved. Next winter missioners were sent round by the pope. Of these the most successful was Peter the Hermit. He had himself started on pilgrimage, but Anna Comnena says that he did not reach Jerusalem. He was an eloquent man and his appeals lured many to their destruction; but the crusades did not originate with him as is popularly supposed.

We have already discussed the origin of the crusades in the proper place and need not here return to the subject further than to say the following. Alexius cared little for the peace of Jerusalem; it was the peace of Byzantium that he was anxious about. The crusaders cared nothing for Byzantium, and were just as ready to fight Alexius as the Saracens. The pope cared nothing for Byzantium, a little for Jerusalem perhaps, but most of all for consolidating his power in Europe and gaining supremacy over the Greek Church. On one subject, however, all were agreed: the Turk was to be driven from Palestine. "Exterminate," said Urban in his oration,

"this vile race from the land ruled by our brethren; it is Christ who commands."

The motives of the leading crusaders were, of course, strangely mixed. Some went to fight the Turk from love of fighting; some from hope of gain; some doubtless went because their hearts were touched. Among the early crusaders many were misguided but sincere.

First went a swarm of pilgrims of all sorts—men, women, and children. They were led by Walter de Poissi, a man who deserved a better following. When the money they had brought with them was exhausted they took to plundering. This led to retaliation; many were slain; many sold as slaves. Helped forward by the imperial officers a remnant reached Constantinople.

Peter the Hermit followed with a similar throng. But he had less control over them than his predecessor. They committed many excesses and were cut to pieces by the infuriated peoples through whose territories they passed. A sorry remnant struggled through to Constantinople. Other throngs followed and with yet more disastrous results.

Alexius was amazed. He had asked for 10,000 armed knights, and this motley crew arrived instead. But he knew that disciplined armies were following, and that he must walk circumspectly. Accordingly he treated the rabble well, gave them abundant provision, and shipped them to the Asiatic shore that they might there peacefully await the arrival of the regular forces. But they could not rest. They attacked their neighbours, and the sultan of Roum attacked them. Soon only 3,000 remained of over 200,000 who had set forth.

Whilst these things were happening to the early bands of
1096. crusaders the knights and men-at-arms were making their arrangements with care. At last they set out in five distinct bodies and found their way to Constantinople by different routes.

Alexius had asked for knights and they had come, but not in the way he desired. He wanted an army of moderate size

and of men who would act under his orders; instead there had come a multitude of warriors, ill-disposed towards him and just as likely to attack Byzantium as Jerusalem.

As a precaution Alexius demanded that the leaders should swear fealty to him before they crossed to Asia, and promise that they would restore to the empire any conquests they might make of territory which had formerly belonged to it. The crusaders strongly objected, but Alexius had his way, and though their promises were only partially kept, he had in the end little reason to complain.

When these matters were settled and the crusaders were ready to cross to Asia, Alexius had almost to use violence before he could tear them from the attractions of Constantinople. At last they crossed the straits and laid siege to Nicæa. When the citizens perceived that their city must fall, they 1097.
negotiated with Alexius and asked him to occupy it with Byzantine troops. He did so and the crusaders only found it out when they saw the Byzantine flag flying. They were enraged, but the emperor pacified them with handsome gifts. This incident, sometimes quoted as an illustration of the emperor's perfidy, showed his good sense. He not only acted in the interests of Byzantium, but in the interests of the inhabitants of Nicæa, who escaped the outrage and murder which would inevitably have followed the capture of their city by the crusaders.

A victory at Dorylæum secured the road through Asia Minor, and after a weary march the crusaders reached Antioch. During the siege of this important city, many quarrels arose amongst them, and some, disgusted with the business, returned home.

After seven months the city fell and there seemed nothing to prevent the advance upon Jerusalem. This was however 1098.
postponed for months owing to disputes, and because some of the leaders were trying to win principalities for themselves.

At last, after much bickering and delay, they reached the holy city. It was taken by storm, and there ensued a slaughter 1099.

too horrible to describe. "Such a slaughter of pagan folk had never been seen or heard of; none knows their number save God alone."

Alexius had kept out of the turmoil. During the siege of Antioch, when the crusaders were in dire straits, he set out to their relief; but hearing from fugitive crusaders that the Moslem was advancing in great force he retired, hoping perhaps that "the Franks and the Turks would worry one another".

After the capture of Antioch the crusaders demanded that Alexius should put himself at the head of their army and lead them against Jerusalem. But he declined, and we can well understand his reasons. He could not have deserted Byzantium at such a crisis, and had he run the risk, he knew well that the crusaders would never obey him.

Godfrey of Bouillon was appointed governor of Jerusalem, and thus the Latin kingdom in Jerusalem was established. But Godfrey refused the royal title, preferring to be styled "protector of the holy sepulchre".

When the crusaders had settled the affairs of Jerusalem and annihilated an Egyptian army which mustered at Ascalon, they set out on their homeward journey. The first crusade was at an end. Godfrey was governor in Jerusalem, Raymond in Laodicea, Bohemond in Antioch, Baldwin in Edessa.

Alexius had recovered for the empire a considerable section of Asia Minor. Whilst the sultan was busy with the crusaders, Alexius had seized Smyrna, Ephesus, Sardis, and many other important places, almost without striking a blow. The crusaders had forced back the Turkish frontier in Asia some two hundred miles. The Seljukian Turks had been hit hard, nor did they recover the ground they had lost for a hundred years.

The survivors of the first crusade soon forgot their toils, and carried home such wondrous tales of their exploits that those who had not accompanied them were filled with envy and organised new expeditions. No wisdom was shown in the management of these and the results were deplorable.

Between 1100 and 1102 A.D. countless thousands went to the East only to die or be sold into slavery. When the remains of several expeditions met in 1102 at Antioch, "of so innumerable a host, alas! scarcely one thousand survived, and these hardly more than bones".

Whenever the crusaders failed they laid their failure at the door of Alexius: Byzantine treachery accounted for all. Alexius may have done little to help the crusaders, but there was little that he could have done. From the beginning they treated him as an enemy; they insulted his people, frequently they ravaged his territory. Had they gone to Palestine by sea all might have been well, but they marched through the Byzantine Empire as through an enemy's country, doing irreparable damage to the relationship between the people and the central authority. The crusaders did not ask the advice of Alexius, nor would they have accepted it if proferred. They learned little from experience, and showed at all times a lack of wisdom which sufficiently accounts for their failures.

Bohemond, the prince of Antioch, who, with his father, Robert Guiscard, had already fought against Alexius, was captured by the Turks and held to ransom. The ransom was paid by an Armenian prince, and on his release, believing that he had a grievance against Alexius, he again crossed swords with him. Leaving Tancred to govern Antioch he escaped to Europe and organised a considerable expedition with which he returned and laid siege to Durazzo. But Alexius fortified the 1107.
passes, and in a short time Bohemond was in such straits that he was forced to conclude a disadvantageous peace. He returned to Italy and soon after died.

The last years of Alexius were comparatively peaceful. There was little rebellion at home, and his foreign enemies had been crushed. Had the Byzantine government and the Latin kingdoms in Syria co-operated the Turks might have been driven far back. But there was no unity of purpose. The crusaders were hard to get on with, and were continually quarreling amongst themselves. We must remember that

they were often men of different nationalities, that they followed different leaders, and that they spoke different languages. If they were ever on friendly terms it was by chance.

Byzantium never prospered as much after the first crusade as it had done before. Genoa, Venice, and Pisa were becoming powerful, and they obtained great trading facilities in the seaports of Syria. Much Eastern trade formerly transacted in Constantinople now passed through Acre and Tyre. It was more convenient for France, Germany, and Italy to trade with the republics for their Eastern goods than with Byzantium. Moreover, these rising republics had no hesitation about engaging in piratical expeditions, and by their attacks upon the islands and coasts of the Ægean they did terrible injury to the commerce of Byzantium. Nations had not yet learned that it is possible for all to become rich together, and the republics foolishly thought that by ruining Byzantium they were enriching themselves.

Hoping to conciliate the republics, Alexius made the economic blunder of bestowing peculiar commercial privileges upon their merchants. The Venetians had been granted access to most of the ports of the empire without the payment of customs dues at an early period in his reign. At a later period the Pisans were similarly favoured, though to a less extent. Thus he really subsidised foreigners at the expense of his own subjects.

During the reign of Alexius there was religious persecution. The sufferers were a sect called the Bogomiles, a Slavonic word which signifies "God have mercy". The Bogomiles were akin to the Paulicians, of whom mention has been made more than once. Like the Paulicians they protested against the worthless ecclesiasticism by which they were surrounded. They taught that singing and prayer and participation in the rites of the Church, and study of the Scriptures, were vain unless accompanied by that inward change by which man was delivered from the power of evil. Such teaching

was but an exposition of our Lord's words to Nicodemus, but it brought the men who taught it to prison, judgment, and death.

Alexius died at the age of seventy, having reigned for thirty-seven years. He had faults like other men, but his faults have been exaggerated. He was a shrewd statesman, a good general, and a brave man. Ascending the throne when Byzantium was in desperate circumstances, he left his dynasty firmly seated, his enemies weakened, and his empire enlarged.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOUSE OF COMNENUS.

1118. JOHN II.—John II. succeeded his father Alexius I. upon the Byzantine throne. His mother Irene, and his sister Anna, hoping to supplant him, endeavoured to persuade the dying emperor to appoint Nicephorus, Anna's husband, as his successor. But Alexius did not waver. John was his eldest son and had long been in his confidence. He knew him to be talented and in every way worthy of the high office. Accordingly, perceiving that his wife and daughter would seize the throne if they could, he permitted John to take his signet ring and assume imperial power without waiting for his death. The exasperated women, learning what had been done without their knowledge, hurled an accusation of hypocrisy at Alexius. The matter would not have been worth mentioning but that historians have too readily accepted their words as evidence of the emperor's character. This is a pity. The taunt was entirely undeserved. Alexius acted on his death-bed, as he had tried to do throughout his reign, in the best interests of the empire.

John was an excellent ruler and a popular man. At first he had to meet palace intrigue fomented by his own family, but when that had been checked his reign was free from sedition. He was one of the best of the Byzantine emperors and earned from his subjects the title of John the Good.

Against foreign foes John fought successfully. It would have been better for the empire had he fought less and given more of his attention to home affairs. The comparative success of the first crusade, and the establishment of the Frankish kingdoms in Syria had afforded the empire a breathing space.

Had John and his son Manuel I., who between them controlled the empire for sixty years, employed that precious time in rooting out some of the abuses that prevailed throughout the empire they might have established it upon a firm foundation. But like the rest of the men of their day, they were carried away by love of military glory, and wasted the resources of their country upon the field of battle.

The Byzantine Empire was still great. Constántinople was still the trading centre of the world, and treaties made with newer communities like Venice and Pisa show that they recognised her supremacy. But the younger communities were inspired with no love for their great rival, and it behoved the Byzantine rulers to walk warily if they desired to maintain the front rank. Unfortunately John and Manuel spent their substance fighting in foreign lands whilst the public property of the empire was going to ruin. Roads, bridges and fortifications were neglected, harbours were allowed to silt up, trade passed away, men became poorer and the population dwindled. The emperors forgot that the strength of an empire must be measured by the prosperity of its people.

In their foreign wars John and Manuel did not always show wisdom. The Turks, against whom Alexius had solicited the aid of the Franks, had been thrust back, and Christian States lay in certain places between the empire and its enemy. It would have seemed true policy to have strengthened these States. Perhaps it was not easy, for their rulers were difficult to deal with. Still, more might have been done. But John and Manuel displayed almost as much vigour against the Frank as they did against the Seljuk Turk. They seemed more concerned that the rulers of the Christian States should yield them a nominal fealty than that the Turkish power should be further impaired.

Venice was now becoming an important commercial power, and was a source of much difficulty at times. The city was splendidly situated for an emporium, and an exchange where Western Europe might obtain the commodities of the Mediter-

ranean and the East. Before the crusades Byzantium fed Venice with Eastern produce, and a friendly feeling had been long maintained. The Byzantine emperors valued the Venetian trade and gave Venetian merchants special privileges. We have seen, in dealing with the reign of Alexius, that these privileges sometimes placed their own subjects at a disadvantage.

Unfortunately, nations had not yet learned how to live and let live. Among the Italians especially there was still the old Roman jealousy which had led to the destruction of commercial rivals like Carthage and Corinth. Nor were men always content to become rich by patient trading. Many commercial fleets were little better than pirate fleets, and there was much robbery and aggression. The Archipelago afforded a tempting field for these evil practices. The islands were small and not always able to defend themselves, and before help could arrive from Byzantium the mischief had been done and the plunderer had sailed away.

The crusades had made matters yet more complicated. The Venetians were no longer wholly dependent upon Byzantium. There were now Latin ports in the Levant through which the commodities of Syria found their way. The Venetians made alliance with the Latin princes and helped them in their aggressive schemes even when these entailed war with Byzantium. Now the Venetians had excellent war galleys, whereas the Byzantines habitually neglected their fleet. The result was that the Venetians scoured the Archipelago and did much mischief to Byzantine commerce. In order to obtain peace John had to make substantial concessions, allowing the Venetians to retain islands which had formerly belonged to the empire.

On shore John's military prowess was undeniable. He was beloved by his troops, and his campaigns were skilfully managed. But he went too far afield and frittered away energies which should have been concentrated upon Asia Minor. When, therefore, he died, as the result of an accident,

at the age of fifty-five, after a reign of twenty-five years, he left the empire weaker than he found it.

MANUEL I.—On his death-bed John nominated his youngest 1143.
son, Manuel, as his successor. Manuel had many kingly qualities. He was handsome, brave, and strong, a good soldier and so doughty a knight that in single combat he never met his match even amongst the most famous of the Western knights. He was also well educated, superior in culture to any prince of his time. He was not prejudiced against the Franks. He was married twice, and on both occasions to Frankish princesses. His children married well, and he exercised a wide influence in Europe. It ought to have been a great thing for Byzantium to have so accomplished a prince upon its throne for thirty-seven years. Yet Manuel's reign was not a success. As a spectacle it was splendid. Constantinople was never more gay. It was often visited by Latin princes, and they were entertained with magnificence. But the splendour was dearly purchased. The Treasury was often depleted and it had to be replenished by rapacity and oppression. Little wonder if the harried provincial began to believe that he might be happier under Turkish than under Byzantine rule.

That the importance of Byzantium at this time was recognised is seen by the nature of its treaties with other powers. The Pisans and Genoese, in exchange for trading privileges were content to acknowledge Byzantine supremacy. They paid duties, promised to assist the empire against its foes, and submitted civil and criminal disputes to its courts. Manuel was the first of the Byzantine emperors to conclude a public treaty with Genoa.

It had been the habit for the islands and outlying districts of the Ægean to maintain war galleys for their own defence. Manuel, partly perhaps in pursuance of a centralising policy principally perhaps that he might replenish his empty treasury, ordered that the money they were accustomed thus to

spend should be remitted to him, and himself undertook their defence. This might have answered had the emperor carried out his part conscientiously. But he took the money and allowed the ships to decay. The result was disastrous. Pirates who would not have dared to attack the islands before did so now with impunity. But worse was to follow.

Manuel became involved in a war with Roger, king of Sicily, a powerful and most ambitious man, and Roger, taking
1147. advantage of a moment when Manuel was anxiously watching the movements of Conrad of Germany and Louis of France, who had embarked upon the second crusade, invaded the empire.

Roger attacked Greece and inflicted injuries upon it from which it took long to recover. Thebes, a rich city, a centre for the manufacture of fine silk brocades, was mercilessly plundered. Some of the silk weavers were seized, and carried with their looms to Palermo, in order that they might introduce this important industry into Italy. Corinth also was sacked, and its skilful artisans were similarly transported. Corfu was conquered and retained by the Sicilians. This invasion did the empire lasting injury. Manuel attempted to avenge himself by invading Sicily, but his fleet was wrecked by storms and he did not resume the enterprise.

On shore Manuel I. was almost constantly at war, and for the most part he was successful. During his reign Servia and Dalmatia were united under one sceptre, and the ruling prince formed an alliance with Roger and encroached on Byzantine territory. Manuel marched against him and gained so complete a victory that the prince of Servia was glad to swear allegiance, and thus make peace.

1151. Manuel invaded Hungary, greatly desiring to gain suzerainty over that country. The war lasted, with intermissions, until 1168, and in the end Manuel was conqueror, and dictated the terms of peace. But the conquest added nothing to the strength of the empire.

During the reign of Manuel the second crusade took place.

Godfrey had been succeeded, as head of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, by Baldwin I., and he by Baldwin II. They were capable rulers, and their successor, Fulk, count of Anjou, was also an able man. Under him the kingdom reached its zenith: under his successors it declined. There were elements in the State itself not favourable to permanence. The population was strangely mixed. The early crusaders had intermarried with the Syrians, and their Eurasian descendants had not the vigour of their sires. Dwelling side by side with these were Syrians, Greeks, Turks, and Arabs, besides the mercantile population from Sicily, Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Byzantium. In time of peace a State composed of such ingredients might prosper, but in time of war it could scarcely be strong.

The first crusade owed much of its success to Moslem disunion. But the Moslems were now united, and a consolidated State had arisen in Syria with a daring and ambitious leader named Zenghi. When Zenghi had conquered his rivals among men of his own faith, he crossed swords with the Franks, first capturing Athareb and afterwards Edessa.

The fall of Edessa alarmed the West and a new crusade was inaugurated. Bernard of Clairvaux was its chief advocate, and he persuaded Conrad III. of Germany, and Louis VII. of France to set out. It was the first time that kings had gone to the crusades.

Conrad was the first to march. He had a splendid army, but 1147.
was accompanied by an immense horde of pilgrims who could not be controlled. Manuel sent messengers to say that they should have the opportunity to purchase provisions if they would preserve the peace. For a while all went well, but in Thrace they began to plunder and destroy, and Manuel was compelled to set upon them with his troops. They behaved better for a time, but on reaching Constantinople they sacked one of its suburbs. Manuel had again to use force, and compel them to cross the Bosphorus.

The emperor gave the Germans an excellent guide through Asia Minor but there was so little order in the army that pro-

gress was slow. They reproached the guide with every failure, and so terrified him that he fled for his life. At Dorylæum the Seljuks attacked them and they were cut to pieces. Those who were fortunate enough to escape with their lives set out for home. Conrad with a mere handful reached Nicæa and joined the forces of Louis VII.

The French had not so many pilgrims with them and did less damage on their journey. But the army was hostile to Manuel, and spoke of laying siege to Constantinople and deposing him. At length he got them across the Bosphorus and into Asia where they soon heard of the failure of the German enterprise.

Hoping to escape the fate of the Germans the French took a different route. But they had disaster upon disaster, and reached Attalia in a wretched plight. There Louis had ships collected, and with as many knights as they could contain set out for Antioch. The common people tried to reach Syria by following the coast, but were destroyed by the enemy almost to a man. Of the vast numbers who had set out upon this second crusade only a few thousands reached the Holy Land.

In Palestine Louis again met Conrad who had come round from Constantinople by sea, and they besieged Damascus. But the siege was a fiasco. Conrad now went home in disgust, Louis followed a year later. A vast number of lives had been lost without result; the crusade had neither weakened the Moslems nor strengthened the Franks.

After the failure of the second crusade the Latin kingdoms struggled on for about thirty years. But the power of the Turk was steadily on the increase. Between 1146 and 1174 the Moslems were united under Noureddin, a sultan of great ability. It is interesting to know that he encouraged polo amongst his soldiers. It was a good game, he said, because it not only provided recreation but enabled them to have their
1174. horses in readiness to repel any sudden attack of the enemy. When Noureddin died he was succeeded by Saladin, one of

the greatest of Orientals, under whom the Moslems presented a united front to the enemy.

Manuel's last war, and by far his most disastrous, was with Kilidge Arslan, the sultan of Iconium. He had encountered Arslan before and had defeated him, and he renewed war with him with some confidence. The sultan 1176.
would gladly have made peace, but Manuel treated him haughtily, and the war went on. Entirely undervaluing their enemy, the Byzantine troops plunged into an extremely difficult pass near Myriokephalon in Phrygia without adequate scouting. When the huge baggage train blocked the pass and the army was divided the Turks suddenly attacked. The Byzantines were taken at a terrible disadvantage, and defence and flight seemed equally hopeless. The emperor broke through and escaped with a portion of his force, and the sultan, satisfied with his unexpected success, again offered terms. This time they were not refused. The war was afterwards renewed and Manuel had some success. But his pride never recovered the shame of Myriokephalon, where so fine an army was carelessly thrown away. Manuel died at the age of fifty-eight, having reigned for thirty-seven years.

ALEXIUS II.—Alexius II. was a boy of twelve when his 1180.
father died. Another Alexius, grandson of John II., became prime minister, but used his power arrogantly and was soon unpopular. Intrigue and insurrection followed, and the discontented fixed their hopes on Andronicus, a cousin of the late emperor. Andronicus was a ruffian who had once attempted to assassinate Manuel and had deserted to the Turks. He was now in exile, and had lately been making a pretence of religious devotion. His former errors were forgotten, and he was invited to return to Constantinople. He returned as 1182.
requested, drove Alexius, the prime minister, from power, blinded him, and massacred his adherents. He then became the guardian of Alexius II., with the title of Cæsar, and as soon as he felt secure he is said to have strangled his young

ward and seated himself upon the throne. It is right to say that the death of young Alexius was afterwards denied, and that some years later a rebellion was raised in favour of a man who professed to be Alexius II., and whose singular likeness to him led many to credit his assertions.

1183. ANDRONICUS I.—When Andronicus had firmly seated himself upon the throne he reigned well. He made some effort to improve the civil administration and to reform finance. He endeavoured to reduce expenditure at court. He tried to lighten the public burdens by fiscal reform, and to purify the civil service by giving the judges adequate salaries and prohibiting the acceptance of gifts.

Nicetas, the historian, gives Andronicus praise for his exertions in abolishing the practice of wrecking and plundering wrecked vessels which prevailed among the Greeks, even as it prevailed in certain parts of England until comparatively recent years. Manuel I. had already inserted clauses in commercial treaties trying to check these barbarous practices, and Andronicus sought to make them effective.

Andronicus deserves full credit for his reforms. Had he been a younger man he might have lived down the past and been a benefit to the empire. It may indeed be that some of the enmity that broke out against him was caused rather by his reforms than by his wickedness. One can never be sure. However this may be, advantage was taken of a temporary absence and an insurrection was raised in Constantinople. When Andronicus returned he found the city in the hands of his enemies. He was seized and, though seventy years of age, he was treated with ruthless barbarity until death put an end to his sufferings. He bore the most horrible torments with fortitude and proved himself not unworthy of the house of Comnenus, a dynasty of brave men of whom he was the last.

CHAPTER XII.

BYZANTIUM RECEIVES HER DEATH WOUND.

THE reign of Andronicus lasted for one year, and it was a 1185.
year of promise. The emperor may have had many bad qualities, but when on the throne he showed himself a man of sense and statesmanship. Certainly Isaac Angelus, whom the mob of Constantinople placed on the throne in his place, was no improvement. Andronicus had capacity if he had not principle; Isaac II. had neither. His reign is a record of oppression and waste. When the people were becoming poorer every day, and the strictest economy should have been practised, Isaac II. spent millions in unnecessary palaces, in church decoration, and in the maintenance of a most extravagant household. That money might be more readily obtained administrative offices were put up for sale, and the officials recouped themselves as best they could.

Prolonged fiscal oppression was now telling its tale in the empire. In the country districts the population was shrinking steadily. Men ceased to cultivate land from which they could barely raise enough to satisfy the tax collector; some emigrated to the capital where life was at least cheerful, and where they might haply obtain some share of the plunder; some emigrated into Turkish territory, tempted by land grants and the hope of lighter taxation.

During the reign of Isaac II. Bulgaria and Cyprus were lost to the empire. Bulgaria had been under Byzantium for two centuries, ever since it had been conquered by Basil II. But the Bulgarians maintained their own language and their independent ways. Irritated by the imposition of a new land tax they raised a national revolt and regained their independence. 1187.

In Cyprus the governor, Isaac Comnenus, a relative of Manuel II., rebelled and defeated the forces sent against him. He proclaimed himself emperor of Cyprus, and held his own for six years. He was ultimately overthrown by Richard I. of England, who gave the island to Guy de Lusignan, under whom it became a Frankish kingdom unconnected with the Byzantine Empire.

Whilst the Bulgarian war was in progress a rebellion broke out which threatened to drive Isaac II. from his throne. Branas, a leading general who had been operating against the Wallachians, assumed the title of emperor and marched upon Constantinople. Isaac seemed paralysed, and the city would have fallen but for the courage of Conrad of Montferrat, a distinguished crusader. Conrad gathered a force of Latin knights and Byzantine veterans and went forth boldly to meet the enemy. Branas was routed and slain on the field. The young Lombard did not remain long in Constantinople, for Latins were not popular there. Hearing that his father had been taken prisoner by Saladin, he hastened south, and increased his reputation by defeating the great Moslem himself under the walls of Tyre.

In our last chapter we saw how Saladin became chief of the Moslems. He was supreme both at Cairo and Damascus, and had the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem almost at his mercy. As for the Latins they were hopelessly divided, and when Saladin tried conclusions with Guy de Lusignan, then king of Jerusalem, the result was inevitable. A great battle was fought at Hattin, near Tiberias, and the Christians were utterly overthrown. Guy and his companions were captured, Jerusalem fell, and in a few months the kingdom of the Franks was reduced to a few coast towns and beleaguered castles.

The fall of Jerusalem filled Western Europe with dismay. The pope at once sent out emissaries to preach a new crusade, offering the usual indulgences to all who would join it. On this occasion little persuasion was needed. Three important

rulers, Frederick of Germany (Barbarossa), Philip of France, and Richard of Aquitaine, afterwards of England, took the cross. Henry II. of England, Richard's father, also took the cross, but died before he could perform his vow. The common people were scarcely less moved than their kings. Scandinavians took the cross, and, more wonderful still, Italians. Hitherto the Italians had been wary for the most part, and had confined their share in crusading to making profit out of the crusader.

The emperor Frederick made his preparations apart from the others and was ready first. Desiring to avoid the pits into which earlier crusaders had fallen he spent a year in maturing his plans. He obtained the permission of the king of Hungary, and of the Byzantine Emperor to pass through their territory, arranged for provisions, and allowed no one to accompany his army who could not pay his way. He knew what Conrad III. had suffered from penniless pilgrims.

At last the great army set out from Ratisbon, 80,000 1188.
strong. The march through Hungary was easy, but when Frederick entered Byzantine territory he saw that the emperor Isaac II. was not dealing fairly with him. He had therefore to march as through an enemy's country, and precious time was lost. But when he had reached Adrianople, and began to plunder the country, Isaac came to terms.

Frederick took a new route, crossing the Hellespont instead 1190.
of the Bosphorus, and proceeding by Philadelphia and Laodicea towards Iconium. The sultan of Iconium had promised to help him, but broke his word, and after leaving Laodicea, Frederick had to fight his way. But he overcame all opposition, reached Iconium quickly, and stormed it. Here the troops found abundant provision, and could rest and refit. Everything promised well, the Taurus range was crossed, and they reached the plains. But here a terrible calamity befell the host, for in the Selef, a river of Cilicia, Frederick was drowned. His death broke up the expedition. His second son, the duke of Swabia, became leader but could not keep the host together.

Some set out to Tripoli, some went home and the young prince reached Antioch with a dispirited remnant. Henry II. of England had died a year before these events and had been succeeded by his son, Richard I. Richard of England and Philip of France started on the crusade together, but, for convenience in provisioning, took different routes and met again in Sicily. There they wintered, and there they quarreled so seriously that the enterprise was almost wrecked. From Sicily they set out in separate expeditions to meet again at Acre.

Acre was in Moslem hands and was being besieged by Guy de Lusignan, whilst Saladin besieged him. Philip arrived first. Richard's vessels were separated by a storm, and some were wrecked on the coast of Cyprus. Isaac Comnenus, the emperor of Cyprus already mentioned, treated the shipwrecked crews badly, and when Richard arrived he demanded redress. When Isaac refused he conquered the island and partitioned it amongst his knights. Afterwards he presented the lordship to Guy de Lusignan, who founded there a dynasty which lasted two hundred years.

1191. The arrival of Philip and Richard put new life into the siege of Acre and it fell. But the crusaders quarreled so much among themselves that many went home in disgust. Amongst these was Philip of France. Richard now led the crusade. He was a splendid fighter but a poor general and too fiery tempered to be popular. The crusaders postponed their march on Jerusalem until Saladin had time to provision and fortify it, and their army so dwindled that the investment of the city was out of the question. Perceiving this, Richard made as good a treaty as he could with Saladin and went home. His adventures on the homeward journey have been described else-

1193. where. Before he reached England, Saladin, his great opponent, had died. The third crusade had left Jaffa, Acre, and Cyprus in Christian hands, and had made it a little easier for pilgrims to reach Jerusalem.

Isaac II. had played his cards badly. He had been humbled by Barbarossa, had lost Bulgaria and Cyprus, and

had to buy peace from the sultan of Iconium by payment of tribute. He became extremely unpopular, and in his absence from Constantinople his brother Alexius formed a palace conspiracy against him. When he hurriedly returned he was seized, blinded, and sent to a monastery, while Alexius III. reigned in his stead.

After the death of Saladin there was civil war amongst the Moslems, and the pope, hoping to profit by their dissension, advocated a new crusade. There was no general response, but Henry VI. determined to emulate his father Frederick Barbarossa, and to lead an army to Syria. There was no justification for the invasion: the Christians of Syria had no desire to renew hostilities. They were at peace with the Moslems and made no complaints.

Three Teutonic armies set out and all safely reached Syria. 1195.
There they ravaged the lands of the Moslems in aimless fashion and notwithstanding the protests of the Christians. They captured Beyrout, and were making plans for carrying the war into the interior when news came that Henry VI. was dead. Upon this the armies fell to pieces. All who 1197.
could went home; a remnant left at Jaffa were massacred.

Isaac's brother, Alexius III., who had succeeded him, was no improvement. The men who helped him in the conspiracy had to be rewarded, and that this might be done the rest were pillaged. There was general discontent, rebellion in the provinces, riots in the capital. The friendly links which had bound the provincials to the central power were either broken or strained to breaking point. Many Asiatic subjects of the empire emigrated into Turkish territory; such as remained had little inclination to lay down their lives for the empire. In Europe the Wallachians, Bulgarians, and Slavs were in arms, and in Thrace and Macedonia an independent principality was set up. Yet the Byzantine Empire had been in sore straits before and had recovered. Had it been left alone, under wise emperors it might once more have righted itself. But this was not to be.

1198. Such then was the state of affairs when Innocent III. became pope. He was an extremely ambitious man, and he at once began to advocate a crusade. But the sovereigns of Europe were tired of crusading and none responded to his call. Some barons of the second degree were persuaded, and an army was gathered, inferior to many that had gone before, yet destined to do more mischief than them all.

On this occasion it was proposed to travel to Syria by sea, and to begin the crusade by attacking Egypt. Agents were therefore sent to Venice to bargain for sea transport. The Venetians drove a hard bargain. They were to provide transport, but to receive a huge sum in cash and half the cities and lands that might be conquered.

When the Venetians saw so many fighting men gathered in their neighbourhood they determined to use them to further the interests of the republic. They cared for neither the Holy Land nor the holy places, but for their own aggrandisement they cared a great deal. Now they were at peace with Egypt, and had no desire to carry the crusaders thither, but they were never tired of injuring the Byzantine Empire and of seizing its possessions. Moreover, Dandolo, the doge of Venice, had a personal grudge against Constantinople, for he had been badly treated there. It is likely, therefore, that from the beginning he plotted to employ the crusaders to ruin the Eastern Empire.

Dandolo began his schemes by delaying the departure of the expedition until the crusaders had exhausted their funds, and had to acknowledge their inability to pay the amount promised for transport. Meanwhile their leader, the count of Champagne, died, and Boniface of Montferrat, a man of a much lower type, was elected in his place. The Venetians then offered to waive the balance of their demand if the crusaders would help them to reduce Zara, a commercial rival on the Adriatic. Zara was a Christian city belonging to the king of Hungary, who had himself taken the cross. When the pope heard of the suggestion he threatened to excommuni-

cate all concerned. But his threats did not disconcert the Venetians. Zara was captured and plundered, and the crusaders spent the winter in its vicinity.

During the winter Dandolo made another move. Alexius, the young son of Isaac II., the ex-emperor, arrived and offered great things to the crusaders on condition that they would restore the Byzantine throne to his father and himself. Dandolo advocated the scheme, and with some persuasion the leaders agreed. They hated the Greeks in any case, and the arrangement seemed to promise much spoil. Accordingly an agreement was signed by which Alexius undertook to pay the crusaders 200,000 marks of silver, supply them with a year's maintenance, and reinforce them to the extent of 10,000 men. To ensure the support of Innocent, Alexius undertook to acknowledge the supremacy of the bishop of Rome over the Greek Church.

In the spring the expedition set out from Zara, and having 1203.
on their way received the submission of various important places, they arrived at Constantinople, and disembarked without opposition on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus.

Under happier circumstances Byzantium might have defied the crusaders as it had formerly defied many a foe. But the carelessness of successive sovereigns had ruined its fortunes. The army was out of condition, the fleet was dismantled and decayed. There was discontent everywhere and open revolt in many parts of the empire, and the Venetians, who had traded so long with Byzantium and had lived for many years in the neighbourhood of the capital, knew every weak spot in the Byzantine armour.

The matter was made worse for Alexius III. by the fact that the demand of the crusaders that the former monarch should be restored was specious, and that Isaac had many friends in the capital. Even if he had been a monarch of ability he would have had no easy task.

Alexius shut his gates and trusted to the strength of his walls. These indeed held back the invaders, but the Venetians

stormed the sea front, and Alexius had no fleet capable of resisting their attack on that side. Accordingly they soon effected a lodgment and fired the city. Alexius fled, and the Byzantine troops, seeing no need for prolonging the contest, brought Isaac from prison, and set him upon the throne. They then informed the crusaders that they had yielded, and asked that young Alexius might be sent to be joint-emperor. Thus all that the crusaders had promised to effect was accomplished.

The bill had now to be paid. It is to the credit of Isaac that when they restored him he frankly declared that he believed it to be impossible to accomplish that which his son had promised. They did their best, but when they had raised all they could, by fair means and by foul, they were still hopelessly in arrears. Moreover, the citizens, maddened at seeing so much wealth leaving the city, revolted. Isaac died of excitement, young Alexius was strangled, and an officer named Alexius Ducas seized the throne.

The crusaders who regretted that they had not stormed the city when they had the chance now laid siege to it with great satisfaction. On the other hand, notwithstanding the terrible disadvantages under which he laboured, Ducas displayed much energy, strengthening the defences, and compelling the people to take up arms and man the walls. Had he been better supported by the citizens he might have succeeded. But they had little stomach for the fray, and his dependence had to be placed almost entirely upon his mercenary troops.

1204. After very deliberate preparation the crusaders made their assault. They concentrated their efforts on the sea wall, but their first attack was beaten off with great loss, and they had to draw back and spend three days repairing damages. The second onslaught was successful, and night found them in possession of a portion of the city. After this the Greeks gave up the struggle. Alexius fled, and Theodore Lascaris, the commander-in-chief, having attempted to rally the troops

in vain, also fled. The Franks were now in full possession A time of unbridled outrage and murder followed. Much o the city was burned, priceless works of art were wantonly destroyed, and Byzantium was robbed for ever of that splendour which had made her for many centuries the admiration of the world. The painful tale has been told in another place and we need not further enlarge upon it here.

The pope made a vigorous verbal protest when he heard what had been done, but consoled himself with the thought that at last the Greek Church was under his feet. But this was not so. Men cling to their Church more closely in adversity. Orthodoxy was now synonymous with patriotism; and the Latin Church was everlastingly abhorrent to the Greek race.

The crusaders having given public thanks to God for their victory, and having made a division of the vast mass of booty which they had gathered in the city, now proceeded to partition the empire. Baldwin, count of Flanders, was elected emperor of the new Latin kingdom. Boniface of Montferrat became king of Thessalonica. The count of Blois was made duke of Nicæa and Nicomedia; the rest took Athens, Achaia, Thebes, and the other cities amongst them.

The Venetians got a great share of the plunder. A large portion of Constantinople was allotted to them, and as the crusaders were of little use as traders, the Venetians obtained a practical monopoly of the trade of the empire. They also obtained lordship over many important islands, settlements in the Peloponnesus, and a large domain along the Eastern shore of the Adriatic. With the aid of her powerful fleet Venice was able to retain her hold upon these possessions for a long time, and her noble families waxed rich upon their ill-gotten gains.

As for the crusaders, they were not numerous enough to maintain their position. Each lord had to conquer his own fief, and few ever got effective possession. This was especially the case in Asia, but it was also true in Europe. Had the

Latins been united they would not even then have been numerous enough to dominate the Greek population. Being as they were men of different nationalities, having nothing in common except the lust of gain, they could not hope long to retain the provinces allotted to them. Accordingly the native inhabitants soon recovered such portions of their territory as had not been acquired by Venice. The Latins were strong enough to rend Byzantium in pieces, but they were not strong enough to build up a new empire upon its ruins.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LATINS IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

CONSTANTINOPLE had been captured, the Greek emperor was a fugitive, and Baldwin of Flanders sat on the Byzantine throne. The capture of the capital filled the empire with dismay. The future seemed indeed dark. Yet the provinces did not rally to the support of the government. Such was the effect of over-centralisation. In a country blessed with constitutional government and municipal freedom there are many trained leaders, and when one falls another steps forward. But in the Greek empire when Byzantium fell all was lost. 1204.

Theodore Lascaris, son-in-law of Alexius III., the brave general already mentioned, had been hurriedly chosen emperor by the people after the flight of Alexius Ducas, but finding it impossible to rally the Greek forces he had escaped from the city before the massacre. He now crossed to Bithynia and took to the hills. Many fugitives joined him and he held his own until the Nicæans, who had shut their gates against him, accepted him as leader. He was then crowned emperor by the patriarch and made Nicæa his capital. 1206.

Baldwin I. only enjoyed his glory for a twelvemonth. The Bulgarians invaded his territory, and he marched against them with the haughty contempt of the Frank for the barbarian. But he was totally defeated, captured and slain. His brother Henry, who had been warring with Theodore in Asia, hearing of his difficulties hurried across, but only arrived in time to succour the remnant of the army and succeed to his brother as Latin emperor.

Boniface of Montferrat, who had received the kingdom of

Thessalonica, was also slain by the Bulgarians, so that Theodore and Henry were the chief representatives of the Greek and Latin forces within the empire. A Latin emperor dwelt on the north side and a Greek emperor on the south side of the Bosphorus.

Henry found it impossible to conquer Theodore, and had so much difficulty with the Bulgarians that he was glad to enter into a truce with Theodore which left little of Asia under Latin control. In Europe he was in a better position, for after the death of Boniface he was recognised by the other Latin princes as their feudal lord. But he could neither conquer the Bulgarians nor conciliate the Greeks.

1207. Theodore invited Pope Innocent III. to arrange a permanent peace between Henry and himself on the understanding that the Latins should have the European provinces whilst the Greeks held the Asiatic. The Pope declined the invitation in an insulting letter which denied to Theodore the title of emperor. Innocent had expected that the fall of Constantinople would mean the destruction of Greek independence, and was angry that it was not so. The popes employed the crusades as a means of increasing their temporal power, and hated the Greeks, who reverenced neither crusader nor pope. As for the emperor Henry, he allied himself with the sultan of Iconium against Theodore, so that the world beheld the strange spectacle of a crusader taking sides with the Moslem against a Christian emperor.

Theodore's father-in-law Alexius III., that particular Alexius whom the crusaders had deposed, had, after various turns of fortune, taken refuge with the sultan of Iconium, and now haughtily demanded that Theodore should abdicate in his favour. When Theodore treated this demand with disdain he united forces with the sultan and marched against him. The-
1210. odore had prepared carefully for the contest and won the day. The sultan was slain, Alexius was captured, the Turks were routed. The victories of Theodore had their effect in Constantinople. There was much oppression and religious persecution,

so many took refuge in Nicæa and Theodore's following increased continually.

Alarmed at the growing strength of Theodore, and having 1214.
received supplies of men and money from France, Henry invaded Asia. Theodore saw that he could not withstand him in a pitched battle, and stood upon the defensive, until Henry, hearing that his European possessions were in danger, made peace and retired. Two years later he died. He had reigned 1216.
for ten years and was the best of the Latin emperors.

With the death of Henry the male line of the counts of Flanders became extinct, and the Franks chose Peter of Courtenay, grandson of Louis VI. of France, as emperor. Peter was in Western Europe at the time, but hastened towards Constantinople. Hoping to shorten his journey he landed at Durazzo and proceeded across country. He had thus to pass through Epirus, and there he was attacked, captured and thrown into prison. In prison he was probably murdered. The Latins of Constantinople were for some time ignorant of his fate, but when they heard of it, they appointed Robert of Courtenay, his son, to the vacant throne.

Robert was a minor, so his mother acted as regent. During 1219.
his reign, Theodore Angelus, the ruler of Epirus, attacked the kingdom of Thessalonica or Macedonia, which had fallen to the lot of Boniface of Montferrat at the partition of the Byzantine empire. Boniface was dead and Theodore Angelus expelled Demetrius, his son, and established himself in his place, thus 1222.
ruling supreme from the Adriatic to the Ægean Sea.

The year that saw the expulsion of Demetrius saw the death of Theodore Lascaris. He had done what he could to save the empire. He left no son and the throne at Nicæa was filled by his son-in-law, John III., an able ruler like himself.

Three years later Theodore Angelus became possessed of 1225.
Adrianople, so that Constantinople was hemmed in on the north by Angelus and on the south by John III., and the only

question seemed to be whether Theodore or John would be the first to capture it.

1228. Robert of Courtenay died young and was succeeded by his brother, Baldwin II., also a minor. John de Brienne, titular king of Jerusalem, was associated with Baldwin in the sovereignty, and the young king in the course of time married his daughter.

The Latin Empire was now confined to the city and suburbs of Constantinople and the peninsula fronting the capital. But Constantinople was splendidly fortified and could scarcely be taken by storm by any army the Greeks could as yet place in the field. Moreover, it had an abnormally large army, for Franks still came from the West to join it, attracted by love
1237. of adventure and hoping for plunder. John de Brienne died, and Baldwin II. became sole Latin emperor.

The financial resources of Constantinople were now sorely reduced. There were no provinces to tax, and such wealthy Greeks as still remained preferred the more congenial atmosphere of Nicæa. Poor Baldwin II. had to trudge over Europe begging from the Western Powers for the support of his monarchy, and meeting with little encouragement.

On the other hand John III. prospered increasingly. He was an intelligent ruler, a brave warrior, and wise in the encouragement of commerce and agriculture. His administration was conducted with economy, and he was able to lighten taxation. Soon he became strong enough to cross to
1230. Europe and drive the Franks out of Southern Thrace. He
1235. even besieged Constantinople itself, but had to raise the siege.
1241. Some years after he conquered Thessalonica so that Constantinople was now hemmed in both on its Asiatic and European frontiers by one Greek Power. Only its mighty walls and the strength of the Venetian fleet kept its rightful owners at bay.

1254. The death of John III. gave the Latin Empire a few more years of life. He was succeeded by his son Theodore II., an excellent man, but unfortunately stricken with epilepsy

His reign lasted for four years, and he left an infant son. Michael Paleologus became guardian to the child, and afterwards joint-emperor. Ultimately he displaced his ward altogether, and was crowned emperor at Nicæa.

Michael VIII. came into power at a most critical time. 1259.
The Latin Empire was at a low ebb, and Baldwin II. was in a hopeless plight. He had tried to raise money in every conceivable way, selling relics, selling the lead from the roof of his palace, depositing his son as collateral security with his bankers. The continued existence of the empire depended on the Venetian fleet. The Venetians were still anxious to maintain their commercial privileges at Byzantium, though these were not now very lucrative. But a bitter war broke out between Venice and Genoa, and the Venetians could no longer give undivided attention to their interests in the Sea of Marmora.

Taking advantage of the favourable circumstances, Michael 1260.
VIII. attacked Constantinople. But the defence was too formidable, so he made a year's truce with Baldwin and retired.
Next year Michael signed a treaty with Genoa, undertaking 1261.
that if the Genoese would help him against Venice and the Latin Empire, he would, if successful, give them the position of favour hitherto enjoyed by the Venetians. Whilst waiting for a Genoese fleet he conferred the title of Cæsar on a favourite general, Alexius Strategopulus, and sent him across the Hellespont with a small force of cavalry and infantry. The object of the expedition was kept secret, but it was bruited abroad that an attack upon Constantinople was in contemplation, and many Greek patriots joined the standard. Still the force was absurdly small for such a service, and Baldwin II., elated by his success the previous year against a much superior force, treated it with scorn. So confident was he that he allowed a Venetian expedition to sail into the Black Sea which reduced his garrison by about 6,000 men. The Greek general, learning what had happened from friends within the city, suddenly attempted its capture. Confederates admitted a chosen few by night; they

opened the gates to their companions, and at daybreak so many Greek troops were within the city that Baldwin lost heart and fled. The Franks and the Venetians stood to arms, and, as the Greek forces were small, they might have given serious trouble. But Alexius, whilst he attacked their quarter, left their communication with the harbour open, so rather than risk a conflict they shipped their families and goods and sailed away.

When the Venetians returned from the Black Sea they found the fortifications manned by Greeks. It was hopeless to attempt to recover the city, and when Alexius offered to permit them also to depart in peace, they thankfully accepted his terms. Thus with much wisdom and little bloodshed the imperial city was recovered by the Greeks.

Michael made his triumphal entry into Constantinople a month later, and was crowned a second time in the Cathedral of St. Sophia. Alexius Strategopulus, who had so cleverly obtained possession of the city, was accorded a well-deserved triumph.

Under Latin occupation, Constantinople had degenerated sadly. The city had been plundered of all its wealth. Much of it had been burned. Costly palaces, private mansions, churches, and public buildings, slowly built up during many centuries, lay dismantled and decayed. The Franks had the rudest ideas with regard to sanitation, and for fifty-seven years the city had scarcely been cleaned. Its beautiful squares and porticoes were filthy and dilapidated. The population had dwindled to a mere fraction of what it had formerly been, and those who remained were spiritless and impoverished.

Not only Byzantium but the whole empire was transformed. In Asia the loss of territory had not been serious; but in Europe, Greece, Macedonia, Northern Thrace, and the islands of the Ægean had passed from the empire. Worse than all, commerce had also passed away. The trade of the Levant was now in the hands of the Genoese and

Venetians, and Constantinople was no longer the mart of the Eastern and Western worlds. It could still command the Black Sea trade, that was about all.

Yet, though Byzantium could never hope to be again to the world that which she had been, her condition was not entirely hopeless. History has many examples of nations which have been humbled in the dust and have again arisen, and under a succession of able administrators Byzantium might have prospered in a degree.

Michael VIII., unfortunately, did not go wisely to work. Had he begun by cleaning the city, restoring roads, bridges, and fortifications, and making every path clear for commerce, matters might have righted themselves to some extent, and an industrious population would have been gradually attracted to the capital. But he began to build from the top, tempting back the aristocracy by grants of land, pensions, and offices, and leaving the humbler classes uncared for. Money sorely needed for trade was frittered away on the restoration of palaces, churches, and other unproductive works.

Michael, not unjustifiably, confiscated the property of the Venetians, and bestowed his favour on the Genoese. Many Venetians, however, remained, and there was much fighting between the rivals. Nor was Michael consistent in his preference. A few years after he had thus established the Genoese, he declared war against them and made a treaty with Venice. Five years later he had a quarrel with Venice, and the Genoese 1265.
were again in favour. They were allowed to establish a factory at Heracleia, and afterwards at Galata, a suburb of Constanti- 1270.
nople. Here they prospered until they almost monopolised the Black Sea trade. Had they been paying their way like the subjects of the empire, this would have mattered little, but as they were receiving preferential treatment over the Greek merchants they were winning prosperity at the expense of the Byzantine community.

The emperor's policy in Asia was unfortunate. His pre-

decessors, Theodore I. and John III., had been popular Asiatic sovereigns, and had identified themselves with the people, but during Michael's reign rapacity and misgovernment abounded. An insurrection in Nicæan territory was suppressed with great cruelty, and Bithynia was impoverished and almost depopulated. People of energy emigrated, and large tracts of land were left without inhabitant. The result was destined to be of immense importance, for a new Moslem power was appearing on the Asiatic horizon, the Ottoman Turk, fated to be a more formidable enemy than even the Seljuk had been.

Michael had constant trouble with the papacy. Urban IV. preached a crusade against him, and he lived in dread of invasion from papal leagues. Charles of Anjou, the pope's chief ally, seemed on the point of following the example of Robert Guiscard and invading the empire. Hoping to disarm his enemies, Michael tried to persuade the Greek ecclesiastics
1274. to acknowledge papal supremacy. Some of them consented, and delegates went to the council of Lyons and arranged for the union of the Churches. But there had been no true representation, and the submission was repudiated in Constantinople.

Michael's position was unhappy enough, seeing that he was threatened with invasion from abroad if he did not submit to the pope, and with rebellion at home if he did. Perhaps, therefore, it is not to be wondered at if his conduct was at
1282. times crooked. At last the terrible Sicilian Vespers, when the native Sicilians arose and butchered all the French in their island, broke the power of Charles of Anjou and delivered Michael from his fears. But the same year he died. He had reigned for twenty-four years, and though a well-hated man and somewhat harshly criticised at times, he deserves credit as the restorer of the Eastern Empire.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CATALANS, THE OTTOMANS, TIMOUR THE TARTAR.

MICHAEL VIII. was succeeded by Andronicus II., his son, who reigned for forty-six years. 1282.

Early in the reign of Andronicus the Latin kingdom in Syria came to an end. There had been several crusades after the fatal fourth which destroyed Byzantium, and, like the earlier ones, they had done little but mischief. The Latin kingdom dwindled until only Tripoli and Acre were left in Christian hands. In 1289 Tripoli fell, and in 1291 Acre surrendered. Syria was again entirely under Moslem rule. There were no more crusades, though every now and then some pope would try to rouse the crusading spirit. But their appeals fell upon deaf ears. Two centuries of terrible failure had taught Europe a salutary lesson.

During his reign chance threw in the way of Andronicus a body of troops, who, had he known how to use them, might conceivably have improved the fortunes of the empire. War had been waged in Sicily for twenty years between the rival houses of Aragon and Anjou. The Spaniards had gathered a force consisting chiefly of men from Catalonia—soldiers of fortune, living only for fighting and plunder. They called themselves the Catalan Grand Company, and boasted their ability to overthrow any troops in the world. Their leader, Roger de Flor, a man after their own heart, had been first a knight templar, next a pirate, and was now a general. 1303.

When peace was concluded in Sicily, Frederick I. had no further use for this force, through whose prowess he had obtained the crown. Invaluable in war, in peace the Catalans constituted a public danger, and when Roger de Flor offered

his services to Andronicus and he accepted them, Frederick gladly furthered their departure. Roger set out for Constantinople and arrived in due course with thirty-six ships and 6,000 men.

Had Andronicus been ready with a plan of campaign, and set the Catalans to work at once, all might have gone well. Properly used, such soldiers would have made short work of the Turks, and might have regained Asia Minor for the empire. But the matter was bungled. The troops landed in Constantinople, were supplied with four months' wages before they had earned it, and were speedily out of hand. They quarreled with the Genoese at Galata and fought them, and when the imperial troops interfered they jeered at them. At last, to the general relief, they crossed the Bosphorus.

When the Grand Company arrived in Asia matters were little better. Michael, the son of Andronicus, was military commander there. He was as incapable as his father of utilising such a force as the Catalans, and by thwarting them in underhand ways he raised their ire. Accordingly they went their own way. At first they attacked the Turks and defeated them wherever they found them, but they soon ceased to push their conquest. Roger de Flor, perceiving how insignificant was the power of the Greeks in Asia Minor, determined to found a principality for himself, and moved his treasure and stores to the city of Magnesia. But Magnesia was an independent city, and the inhabitants rose against the garrison, slew them, and seized the treasure. Roger invested the city, but having no siege artillery he was repelled. Greatly exasperated at the loss of their treasure the Catalans determined
1305. to recoup themselves, and plundered on every hand. When they had ravaged Asia Minor they recrossed the Hellespont and invaded Europe, a terror to friend and foe.

Unable to use the Catalans, Andronicus now set about trying to get rid of them. Roger, on a friendly visit to Adrianople, was massacred with 300 of his men. Upon this the Catalans threw off allegiance and declared war. They

made Gallipoli their headquarters, and defied the efforts of the Greeks to dislodge them. For the murder of their leader and comrades they took terrible vengeance, slaying and torturing Greek men, women, and children. Their numbers did not lessen, for volunteers, including many Turks, joined their band. When at last the country round Constantinople was so wasted that it had ceased to be a temptation to the spoiler the Catalans entered the service of the duke of Athens, and crossed to Macedonia. Here their fortunes declined: they broke into parties, and ceased to be formidable. But they were not entirely got rid of for several years, and they had wrought irreparable mischief.

Whilst Andronicus had been warring with the Catalans all hope of regaining the Asiatic provinces had passed away. The Turks had reconquered Lydia and Phrygia, and were attacking Bithynia and Mysia. The Byzantine dominion in Asia was now confined to a narrow strip of territory along the shore of the Sea of Marmora, with one or two cities. The once well-peopled countries of Asia Minor were sparsely populated, mostly by Turkish nomads, and ambitious Turkish leaders were founding principalities for themselves in the districts which they had conquered.

Michael, the son of Andronicus II., died, and the emperor chose a grandson as heir. But the young man committed various follies, and, being apprehensive lest he should be superseded, he rebelled. Civil war dragged on for seven years and ended in the deposition of the old emperor.

Andronicus III. reigned for thirteen years. A new power 1328.
was now arising in Western Asia. We have seen how the Seljuk Turks increased in importance until they established themselves as sultans of Roum, and had their capital at Nicæa. We have seen also how the Eastern emperor, alarmed at their progress, made the fatal error of soliciting help from the pope.

The crusaders forced back the Seljuk Turks until their capital was no longer at Nicæa, but at Iconium. But they never really crushed them, and they remained the dominant

power in the central parts of Asia Minor. When the fourth crusade destroyed Byzantium the Seljuk Turks might easily have extended their dominions had they not themselves been engaged in conflict with the Moguls, a rival Mohammedan power. It is in connection with this struggle that we first hear of the Ottoman Turk.

Aladdin, one of the sultans of Iconium, hard pressed in battle by the Moguls, was saved by the gallantry of Ertogrul, chieftain of a small but warlike Turkish tribe. Aladdin gratefully rewarded his allies by giving them pasture lands near Angora, and bestowing upon their chief the title of emir or prince. Further grants of territory extended the dominions of Ertogrul to the Byzantine frontier, but for the moment he held all as liegeman to the sultan of Iconium.

1288. Ertogrul was succeeded by Othman his son, from whom the more familiar name of Ottoman was derived. Othman was a ruler of great ability, brilliant both as warrior and administrator. Aladdin the sultan having been dethroned and slain by the Moguls, Othman was released from his allegiance, and from that time the Ottomans increased in power and the Seljuk Turks decreased.

1326. Before Othman died, many adventurous Turks had flocked to his standard and his army had become formidable. In his son Orkhan he had a worthy successor. The year in which his father died Orkhan captured Brusa, an important city lying near the Sea of Marmora, not very far from Nicæa.

Brusa became the Asiatic capital of the Ottomans, and from
1327. it Orkhan planned his further advance. He captured Nicomedia and laid siege to Nicæa. Andronicus III. and John Cantacuzenos, his chief minister, crossed the Bosphorus and
1329. attempted to save Nicæa. But they were routed at the battle of Pelekanon, the first battle fought between Greek and Ottoman. Nicæa held out for some time but was at length taken.

When Nicæa surrendered, Orkhan showed much wisdom. Instead of massacring the inhabitants he treated them with lenity. If they preferred to depart they might do so in safety,

carrying their property with them; if they elected to remain they were assured of protection. Municipal government was not interfered with, and the condition of the Asiatic Greek was made more tolerable under the Turk than it had been under the empire. When once it became widely known that this was the case, Orkhan found the work of conquest easy. Profiting therefore by the incapacity of Andronicus and the indifference of the people, he continued his aggression, until little remained to the emperor save a strip of territory on the coast of the Bosphorus.

Orkhan is famed in history as the founder of the corps of Janissaries. This was a body-guard of picked troops who accompanied the sultan wherever he went, and were entrusted with the safety of his person. The first Janissaries were Christian captives who adopted the Moslem creed, but later they became merely a standing army of professional warriors. The Western Powers had not yet adopted standing armies, so that the Janissaries were notable. They retained their power and privileges for 500 years, and were in the end often the masters rather than the servants of the sultan.

On the death of Andronicus III., his son, John V., succeeded. He was but nine years of age, and the power fell into the hands of Cantacuzenos. His mother, Anne of Savoy, and the patriarch conspired against this minister, and six years of civil war followed. Cantacuzenos was successful in 1847.
the end and became joint-emperor, John V., now fifteen years of age, arranging to marry his daughter. The treaty did not produce lasting peace. Four years later civil war again broke out, and though Cantacuzenos was again successful he became so unpopular that he had to abdicate. He retired into a 1354.
monastery, and spent the evening of life writing history.

During the civil wars both sides had accepted aid from the Ottoman Turks, who had been admitted into Europe and allowed to remunerate themselves for their services by pillage. They ravaged Thrace and carried thousands of Greeks out of Europe into Asia to be sold as slaves. Moreover, they estab-

lished themselves so firmly in Thrace that they were never again driven out.

The empire had gone from bad to worse. The Greeks had utterly lost heart, and the population had decreased to such an extent that the capacity for resistance was taken away. On the other hand the Ottomans increased in numbers and in power. In the year in which Cantacuzenos abdicated, Suleiman, Orkhan's son, seized and garrisoned Gallipoli, and John V. was unable to expel him.

Suleiman was accidentally killed, and when Orkhan died
1359. he was succeeded by his second son, Amurath I. With Gallipoli as a base for his operations Amurath captured several
1361. cities, Adrianople among the rest. This important city became his capital, and remained the Turkish capital for nearly a century. The Turks now lay between Constantinople and the Slavonic States, and for several years were mainly occupied warring against these. Parts of Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Servia yielded to the Turks and paid tribute.

1369. The position of John V. was now so desperate that he went to Rome and pleaded with Urban V. for help. He was willing to accept any creed and be converted to any faith if he could obtain thereby troops wherewith to meet his enemies. But the day had gone by when popes could stir up the Western nations to send troops to the East. Accordingly John returned to Constantinople and accepted the situation. The Byzantine Empire was now merely a municipality, and John became the
1381. vassal of the sultan and agreed to pay tribute.

The fall of Constantinople would almost inevitably have followed these events but for other important matters. The Slavonic States formed a league for mutual protection, and offered a combined resistance to Amurath. A tremendous battle was fought at Kossova, and though Amurath was vic-
1389. torious he was assassinated immediately after the battle.

Amurath was succeeded by his son, Bajazet I., also a great warrior. Bajazet completed the conquest of Asia Minor by
1391. capturing Philadelphia, which had long existed as a free town.

The same year John V. died, and Manuel II. succeeded him. Manuel accepted the same subjection to the Turk which had been imposed upon his father.

The Byzantine Empire had now ceased to be a bulwark against the Turk, and that duty had fallen upon the Servians and Hungarians. It is vain to blame the Byzantine emperors for this state of affairs. The blame lies wholly at the door of the popes and crusaders. It was they who rudely tore down the bulwark and made further resistance impossible. After the fatal fourth crusade Byzantium became the sport of circumstances.

The advance of the Ottoman was now causing general alarm, and a coalition was formed against Bajazet under Sigismund, king of Hungary. A great battle was fought at Nicopolis, and the Christian forces were routed. They suffered terribly, but the Turks also lost 60,000 men. 1396.

After Nicopolis, Manuel, perceiving that the end drew nigh, admitted his nephew John as a colleague, and, leaving the government in his hands, set out to Western Europe to represent to the professedly Christian Powers the state of affairs in the East. During his absence Bajazet laid siege to Constantinople, and would have captured it but for an extraordinary turn of Fortune's wheel.

Another mighty warrior appeared on the scene, and another Tartar horde poured from Central Asia. Timour or Tamerlane, his mother a Mongolian, his father a Turk, himself a soldier from the age of twelve, lame in the leg, cripple in the hand, but hard as steel and fierce as a wild cat, was now Lord of Turkestan. Born in 1335, and fighting incessantly, he had conquered Turkestan, Kashgar, Persia, and Mesopotamia. The Tigris and Euphrates Valleys fell under his sway, the Georgians 1387.
were crushed, the Armenians submitted in terror. The fortress of Van held out for twenty days, and when it was captured the garrison, man by man, were cast from the great rock on which the fortress stood.

One of Timour's greatest feats was the conquest of Hin- 1398.

dustan. Crossing the Indus at Attock he swept through the Punjaub to Delhi. The sultan of Delhi, deceived by a pretence of weakness, came into the open country to give battle, and was overwhelmed. Delhi was then easily captured and sacked. The Ganges was crossed, and when every force that could be brought against him had been defeated, Timour emerged from India and turned his arms westward. He first encountered the Ottoman Turks at Sivas. The city was defended by Ertogrul, the son of Bajazet I. It was captured and Ertogrul was slain.

Bajazet heard of the fall of Sivas and the death of his son whilst he lay near Constantinople. He at once raised the siege and crossed the Bosphorus. Before the rival armies could meet, Timour had overrun Syria, stormed Bagdad, and heaped up 90,000 human heads in its public squares.

1402. The battle between Ottoman and Tartar was fought at Angora. Both sides fought furiously, but the Tartar won. Bajazet was taken prisoner and died in captivity.

The battle of Angora gave Constantinople a reprieve for half a century. Manuel returned from the West. He had failed to obtain help, and he had to promise to Timour the tribute he had paid to Bajazet; but these were small matters. For the moment the Ottoman Power seemed annihilated, and his mind was at ease.

Timour quickly reduced Asia Minor, but having no fleet he could not cross to Europe. Christian and Turk alike covered the narrow seas with ships to guard against the passage of

1404. this new terror. Too impatient to tarry until ships could be built for his use Timour swung round and returned to Samarkand. After a few months' rest he set out for the conquest of

1405. China, but on his way the King of Terrors met and conquered him.

CHAPTER XV.

THE END OF THE EMPIRE.

AFTER the battle of Angora the Ottoman Power seemed 1402.
annihilated. Had Timour tarried in Asia Minor this might have been the ending, though Byzantium would probably have profited little by the change of masters. But he returned to Samarkand, leaving Asia Minor only half conquered, and died without finishing the work.

Bajazet died in captivity, and for the next ten years his four sons fought for the succession. At last Mohammed, the 1413.
youngest, won the day. During the civil war the Seljukian emirs had again become independent, but under Mohammed I. they were speedily cast down. The vassal States were too weak to make serious resistance and quickly yielded again to the Ottomans, both in Asia and in Europe.

Manuel II. had taken Mohammed's side in the civil war and was on friendly terms with him. He entertained his suzerain in Constantinople with as much splendour as his now reduced resources could command.

Mohammed I. reigned for eight years, and was suc- 1421.
ceeded by his son Amurath II. Against Amurath Manuel intrigued, and the Moslem revenged himself by laying siege to Constantinople. At this siege cannon were seen for the first time in the East. The first assaults were repulsed, and before Amurath could make progress, he was called away to his Eastern provinces to quell a rebellion there. When he returned to Europe, Manuel appeased his wrath by fair pro- 1424.
mises and increased tribute. Next year Manuel died. He was seventy-seven years of age, and had reigned for thirty-four years.

1425. John VI., his son, succeeded to a dominion which only extended a few miles outside the walls of the city. Realising his inability to cope with the Ottomans, he accepted the position of vassal and secured peace in his time. But there was no hope of recuperation. Both within and without the city the Greek population had greatly declined in numbers and in wealth. The city itself, once the wonder of the world, had fallen very low. Its magnificent walls and fortifications sheltered empty spaces and a meagre population. A terrible
1431. pestilence, the ninth visitation in a century, made matters worse.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that John, thus isolated and weak, should, like so many of his predecessors, have looked to the West for help. But like them he looked in
1438. vain. Accompanied by the Greek patriarch, he set out on his heart-breaking errand. Conferences were attended at Ferrara and Florence, the doctrines of the Roman Church were formally accepted, the union of the Eastern and Western Churches was proclaimed. This gratified Eugenius IV., the pope, but advantaged the emperor nothing. The pope was kind, he showed John every courtesy and treated him with liberality, but there was nothing more that he could do. No Western prince showed the slightest disposition to place his troops at the service of either pope or emperor. With a little money and three hundred mercenaries John returned to find that his submission had roused bitter hostility among his own people. They declared that they would rather have the Moslem turban than the papal tiara in St. Sophia. Considering the treatment Byzantium had received from Western Christianity we do not wonder at it.

On the death of John Constantine XI. succeeded to the imperial ruin. Constantinople had lost every sign of prosperity. Its mansions were dilapidated, its churches were dismantled, its very marbles and columns had been sold to the highest bidder. The fortifications had been neglected; but,

had it been otherwise, there were not enough men in the city to guard the long stretch of rampart. Constantine was able and brave. But he could not perform impossibilities. The revival of the Byzantine Empire was beyond the power of man.

We have already seen how the Northern nations had leagued themselves in order to check the onward career of the Turks. They now made another effort. The Hungarians and Poles made common cause under Ladislas, their king, the pope encouraged them, and a crusade was preached throughout Europe. But the day of religious heroics had gone by. The Western governments took no part in the movement; only a few adventurous spirits came to the rescue. The forces of the coalition were led by John Hunyadi, a particularly gallant general, and they were at first successful. They crossed the Danube, marched through Bulgaria, and 1442.
twice defeated the Turks. The Ottomans were so pressed that they sought peace, and the treaty of Szedegin was arranged. 1444.

Sad to relate, Ladislas, the Christian monarch, persuaded by Pope Eugenius, against the opinion of John Hunyadi, repudiated the treaty and crossed the Danube. At first he was victorious, but Amurath made a supreme 1444.
effort, and at Varna won a complete victory. The slaughter was tremendous on both sides. Ladislas was slain, Hunyadi escaped. Some years afterwards Hunyadi again took the field, but in the second battle of Kossova he was routed 1448.
and captured. He had made a splendid fight, though enormously outnumbered.

Amurath was succeeded by his son, Mohammed II., an 1451.
ambitious and determined man. Mohammed made up his mind to reduce the tributary States forthwith, Constantinople among the rest. Easily finding an excuse for aggression, and without taking the trouble to declare war, he erected forts on Greek territory at the narrowest part of the Bos- 1452.
phorus. On the southern side a fort already stood, and amongst them they commanded the strait, blocking the pas-

sage between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. Other preparations for the siege were made at Adrianople. Stores and troops were gathered in abundance, and cannon of an extraordinary size were cast. One brass gun was capable of projecting a stone shot weighing six hundred pounds for half a mile.

The emperor did what he could. He had 4,000 troops of his own and 2,000 citizens volunteered. In addition there were 3,000 Genoese and Venetians. All told, the defenders barely exceeded 9,000 men, and the attacking force numbered about 70,000 men of all arms.

Perceiving that without speedy help the city was doomed, Constantine made a final appeal to the Western Powers. But they had their own affairs to mind and cared nothing for Byzantium. The pope sent Cardinal Isidore, a Russian by birth, with a few men and a little money. The cardinal and his company fought splendidly when the time came. Indeed, judging by the fight made by the devoted handful, it is certain that if Venice and Genoa had sent even a moderate force the city could once more have successfully withstood the Moslem assault.

Justiniani, a Genoese, the most experienced soldier present, was made commander-in-chief. The artillery was commanded by John Grant, a military engineer who had come with Justiniani. He is said to have been German, but we have our doubts.

1453. Having made most elaborate preparations, Mohammed set out from Adrianople. The roads and bridges on the route had been carefully examined and strengthened for the passage of the heavy train of artillery and baggage waggons by which he was accompanied. The journey was tedious, and though the army began its march in February it was April before the whole train reached Constantinople.

Once opposite the city no time was lost. Lines were drawn out, trenches dug, mounds raised, and batteries erected. The chief attack was made on the gate St. Romanus, against which the huge gun of which we have spoken was levelled.

For a time the defence was conducted with great spirit. Breaches were quickly repaired, counter-mines were dug, and when the Turks made huge timber towers and pushed them against the walls, sorties were made and the towers were destroyed.

Some vessels of large size from Chios ran the blockade with splendid courage and brought stores into the city. Indeed the result of the early defence of the city was to depress the courage of the Ottomans and raise the spirit of the Greeks. Had even moderate succour arrived and the number of the defenders borne any reasonable proportion to the attacking party, Mohammed would have failed to carry the city. But he knew that the defenders were but a handful and that time was on his side.

Meanwhile the Moslems showed great persistence and ingenuity. They constructed plank roads over five miles of rough country in order that they might transport a portion of the fleet overland, from the Bosphorus to the Golden Horn, and they built a floating bridge across the port capable of sustaining heavy artillery.

The besieged fought on, but being so few in number they had rest neither day nor night, and became jaded. Slowly but surely the enemy gained upon them. When at last a breach was made at St. Romanus the sultan called on Constantine to surrender the city. Few men would have hesitated under such circumstances, but Constantine refused, and the Moslems prepared to take it by storm.

The night before the assault Constantine rode round the various forts and encouraged the garrison. Then he partook of the Sacrament, bade farewell to all in the palace, and asked their pardon for any wrong he had done them. After that he mounted his horse and rode to the gate. He had determined to stand with the rest in the breach and fall with the city.

The battle began at daybreak. The principal attack was made upon the breach, but the numbers of the assailants per-

mitted them to make subsidiary attacks on other and almost undefended parts of the fortification.

For two hours the defenders toiled, repelling every attack. Column after column of Moslems poured forward in a continuous stream. At first forced troops, recruited from newly conquered nations, were driven forward under the lash. These were easily defeated, but they served their purpose. They wearied the defenders and levelled up the ditches with their dead bodies. Even when the chosen troops began their assault they were not at once successful. The citizens were now fully aroused, and old men and even women were taking part in the conflict. But it was in vain. The defenders were worn out: the assailants were always fresh. An entry was forced simultaneously at the breach and at the circus gate, other gates were thrown open, and the Ottomans poured in from every side.

Justiniani had to retire badly wounded in the face just before the end; Constantine and his brave companions were trodden under foot. The last of the Byzantine emperors had fallen with his face to the foe. There was no longer any resistance. The citizens fled for refuge to St. Sophia. But there was little refuge for them there. Many were murdered, the rest were dragged out and set aside for the slave market.

Justiniani escaped to Chios, but died shortly after. Cardinal Isidore, disguising himself in the dress of a dead soldier, was taken prisoner with the rest and ransomed without his rank being divulged. He reached Italy in safety. The body of Constantine was found so mauled as to be recognisable only by its apparel. The head was struck off by the Turks and sent round their chief cities in triumph; the body received decent burial.

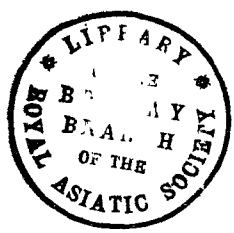
Constantinople was now almost without inhabitant and had to be repeopled. Mohammed was not content to wait until this could be accomplished in an ordinary way. He bought a number of Greek prisoners from his soldiers and settled them in one quarter of the city. Thousands of families were trans-

ferred from the subject provinces and were compelled to take up their residence in Constantinople and its environs. Others were tempted by grants of land. Prisoners made in subsequent contests might choose between slavery and residence in the capital.

When the lust of vengeance was sated, Mohammed dealt wisely with the Greeks. St. Sophia was turned into a mosque and forty other Christian churches shared the same fate; but the rest were secured to the Greeks by charter, and their worship was not interfered with. A new and subservient patriarch was appointed, and the Sultan declared himself protector of the Greek Church. Confidence was slowly restored and many who had fled returned.

The Venetians and Genoese quickly made terms with the conqueror, the Genoese remained at Galata and traders gathered round. Having fixed upon the city as his capital, Mohammed spared no pains to make it worthy of its position. The fortifications were repaired though the height of the walls was reduced; mansions and palaces were redecorated; artists and artisans were imported: works of beauty and magnificence were undertaken.

Before the end of Mohammed's reign Constantinople was in far better condition than it had been since the ill-fated Latin occupation. But the Byzantium of former days had perished and mosque and minaret spoke eloquently of the change. At last the Roman Empire was at an end. That city which had been dedicated by its founder to Christianity and which had for so many centuries stood, a bulwark against the enemies of Christendom, was now the chief seat of Moslem dominion, and the Ottoman Turk had taken his position as one of the first Powers in Christian Europe.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APPENDIX.

TABLES OF SOVEREIGNS.

(1) Roman Emperors.

B.C.	
27	Augustus.
A.D.	
14	Tiberius I.
37	Gaius (Caligula).
41	Claudius I.
54	Nero.
68	Galba.
69	Otho.
69	Vitellius.
69	Vespasian.
79	Titus.
81	Domitian.
96	Nerva.
98	Trajan.
117	Hadrian.
138	Antoninus Pius.
161	Marcus Aurelius.
180	Commodus.
193	Pertinax.
193	Didius Julianus.
193	Septimius Severus.
211	Caracalla.
217	Macrinus.
218	Heliogabalus.
222	Alexander Severus.
235	Maximinus.
238	Gordian I. and II.
238	Maximus and Balbinus.
238	Gordian III.
244	Philip I.
249	Decius.
251	Gallus.
253	Æmilianus.
253	Valerian.
260	Gallienus.
268	Claudius II.
270	Aurelian.
275	Tacitus.
276	Florianus.
276	Probus.
282	Carus.
283	Carinus.
283	Numerian.
284	Diocletian.
286	— and Maximian.
305	Constantius I. and Galerius.
307	Constantine I., Maximian, Maxentius in West; Galerius, Maximinus, Licinius in East.
323	Constantine I. sole emperor.
337	— II., Constantius II., Constans I.
353	Constantius II. sole emperor.
361	Julian.
363	Jovian.
364	Valentinian I. and Valens.
375	— II., Gratian and Valens.
379	— II., Gratian and Theodosius I.
394	Theodosius I. sole emperor.
395	Theodosius at his death appoints Honorius to rule the West, Arcadius to rule the East.

Roman Emperors in the West, ruling from Rome, Ravenna, Milan, etc.		*Roman Emperors in the East, ruling from Constantinople.*	
395	Honorius.	395	Arcadius.
423	Valentinian III.	408	Theodosius II.
455	Maximus.	450	Marcian.
457	Majorian.	457	Leo I.
461	Severus II.		
467	Anthemius.		
472	Olybrius.		
473	Glycerius.		
474	Julius Nepos.	474	Leo II.
475	Romulus Augustulus.	474	Zeno.
476	Odovacar.		
478	Western empire nominally ended.		

(2) Ostrogothic Sovereigns in Italy.

488	Theodoric the Great.	491	Anastasius I.
526	Athalaric and Amalasuntha.	518	Justin I.
535	Amalasuntha and Theodahad.	527	Justinian I.
536	Witigis.		
540	Hildibad.		
541	Totila (Baduila).		
552	Teias.		

Empire momentarily reunited by Justinian.

(3) Byzantine Emperors.

565	Justin II.	963	Nicephorus II. and Basil II.
578	Tiberius II.	969	John I. and Basil II.
582	Maurice.	976	Basil II. sole emperor.
602	Phocas.	1025	Constantine VIII.
610	Heraclius.	1028	Zoe and Romanus III.
641	Constantine III. and Heracleonas.	1034	— and Michael IV.
		1041	— and Michael V.
641	Constans II.	1042	— and Constantine IX.
668	Constantine IV.	1054	Theodora.
685	Justinian II.	1057	Michael VI.
695	Leontius usurps.	1057	Isaac I.
698	Tiberius usurps.	1059	Constantine X.
705	Justinian II. restored.	1067	Michael VII. and Romanus IV.
711	Philippicus.	1078	Nicephorus III.
713	Anastasius II.	1081	Alexius I.
715	Theodosius III.	1118	John II.
717	Leo III.	1143	Manuel I.
741	Constantine V.	1180	Alexius II.
775	Leo IV.	1183	Andronicus I.
780	Constantine VI.	1185	Isaac II.
797	Irene.	1195	Alexius III.
802	Nicephorus I.	1203	Isaac II. and Alexius IV.
811	Stauracius.	1204	Alexius V.
812	Michael I.	1204	Latin occupation of Constantinople. Byzantine emperors rule from Nicæa.
813	Leo V.		
820	Michael II.		
829	Theophilus.	1204	Theodore Lascaris.
842	Michael III.	1222	John III.
867	Basil I.	1254	Theodore II.
886	Leo VI.	1259	Michael VIII.
912	Constantine VII.	1261	Constantinople recovered.
959	Romanus II.	1282	Andronicus II.

1328	Andronicus III.
1347	John V.
1391	Manuel II.
1425	John VI.
1448	Constantine XI.
1453	Constantinople captured and occupied by the Ottoman Turks.

(4) Latin Usurpers in Constantinople.

1204	Baldwin I.
1205	Henry of Flanders.
1216	Peter of Courtenay.
1219	Robert.
1228	Baldwin II.
1261	Constantinople recovered.

(5) Caliphs.

632	Abu Bekr.
634	Omar.
643	Othman.
656	Ali.
661	Muavia I.
679	Yezid I.
683	Muavia II.
683	Merwan I.
684	Abd al Melik.
705	Walid I.
715	Soliman.
717	Omar II.
720	Yezid II.
724	Hisham.
743	Walid II.
744	Yezid III.
744	Ibrahim.
744	Merwan II.
750	Abu Abbas.
754	Mansur.
775	Mehdi.
785	Hadi.
786	Haroun al Raschid.
809	Amin and Mamun.
813	Mamun alone.
833	Motasim.
841	Wathek.
847	Motawakkel.
861	Montaser.
862	Mostain.
	Moslem world now greatly divided.
1055	Seljuk Turks occupy Bagdad and begin career of conquest.
1288	Ottoman Turks begin their career, gradually superseding Seljukians.
1453	Ottoman Turks capture and occupy Constantinople.

(6) Kings of Jerusalem.

1099	Godfrey of Boulogne.
1100	Baldwin I.
1118	— II.
1131	Fulk of Anjou.
1143	Baldwin III.
1163	Amalric I.
1173	Baldwin IV.
1185	— V.
1186	Guy of Lusignan.
1191	Conrad of Montferrat.
1192	Henry of Champagne.
1197	Amalric II.
1205	— III.
1210	John of Brienne.
1225	Isabella.
1228	Frederick II.
1268	Hugh of Lusignan.
1291	Acre is captured by the Saracens, and Syria is entirely in Moslem hands.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY LIBRARY

INDEX.

Abbas, 394, 407, 438-42.
Abbassides, 438-47.
Abdalla, Mohammed's father, 386.
— General, 407.
— of Medina, 400.
— son of Zobeir, 429-32.
— the Abbasside, 438.
— governor of Syria, 441.
Abd al Melik, 432, 433, 553.
Abd al Muttalib, 387.
Abd al Rahman, 421.
Abd er Rahman, 437, 440.
Abgarus, 595.
Abraham, 383, 384, 603.
Abu Bekr, 389, 392, 394, 398, 409, 412, 415, 416, 417, 421, 422, 426, 545, 546.
Abu Lahab, 385.
Abu Muslim, 438, 441.
Abu Sufyan, 399, 401, 407, 422, 425, 438.
Abu Talib, 387, 388, 391, 393.
Abwa, 386.
Abyssinia, 379, 380, 392, 393, 405.
Accius, 19.
Achaia, 637.
Achilles, 152.
Acre, 476, 477, 489, 491, 492, 493, 494, 505, 506, 510, 519, 522, 618, 632, 647.
Acroinon, 562.
Acte, 72.
Actium, 5.
Adela, 478.
Aden, 381.
Adeodato, 329.
Adhemar, 465, 470.
Adolphus, 310, 311, 314, 327, 356.
Adrianople, 220, 248, 250, 273, 357, 570, 586, 641, 648, 652, 657, 658.
Ælia Capitolina, 131.
Ælia Pactina, 58.
Æmilianus, 191, 192.
Ætius, 313, 314, 321-26, 330-33, 358.
Afranius, 26.
Aglabites, 443, 446.
Agricola, 110, 111, 136, 153, 155.
Agrippa, husband of Julia, 37, 38.
— Herod I., 49, 57.
— Herod II., 57, 99.
Agrippina, wife of Tiberius, 38.
— mother of Nero, 59, 60, 71-74, 149.
Aigues Mortes, 515, 520.
Aistulf, 566.
Aix, 569.
Ajnadin, 418.
Akaba, 409.
Akhlat, 607.
Akiba, 131.
Aladdin, 650.
Alans, 186, 246, 252, 304, 312, 321, 322, 327.
Alaric, 251, 292, 297, 300-11, 315, 341, 354.
— II., 348.
Albania, 542.
Albigenses, 502, 506, 582.
Albinus, 166, 167, 185.
Alboin, 526, 527.
Alemanni, 193, 199, 200, 242, 243.
Aleppo, 418, 481, 486.
Alexander the Great, 94, 124, 174, 175, 179, 380, 439.
— Bishop, 228, 262.
— Emperor, 181-84.
— Leo's brother, 586.
Alexandria, 5, 51, 88, 92, 174, 196, 204, 211, 228, 230, 238, 259, 262-64, 405, 420-23, 428, 475, 487, 498, 540, 547-49, 572.
Alexius I., 459, 464-67, 470, 478-80, 608-20.
— II., 627, 628.
— III., 498-503, 633-36, 639, 640.
— IV., 498-501, 636, 639.
— V., 501, 503.
— Strategopoulus, 643, 644.
Alfred, 148.
Algeria, 295.
Algiers, 428.
Ali, 388-447 *passim*, 549.
Alice, 492.
Allectus, 211.
Al Nadir, 391, 399.
Alp Arslan, 455, 606, 607.
Alps, 185, 193, 200, 219, 252, 311, 338, 527.
Amal, 344.
Amalafreda, 352.

Amalasuntha, 351-53, 366-69.
Amalfi, 457, 475.
Amalric, 481, 486, 487.
Ambrose, 252-59, 274, 278-82, 291, 300, 329.
America, 337.
Amida, 542.
Amiens, 460.
Amin, 443.
Amina, 386.
Ammonius, 265.
Amorium, 445, 572, 573.
Amr, 406, 418, 420, 421, 426, 427, 548.
Amurath I., 652.
— II., 655.
Anastasius I., 360-62, 365.
— II., 555, 556.
Anatolius, 358.
Anbasa, 436.
Ancona, 119.
Andalusia, 312, 327.
Andes, 30.
Andrew II., King of Hungary, 506, 507.
Andronicus I., 628, 629.
— II., 647-49.
— III., 649-51.
Andronicus, author, 14, 15.
Anglesea, 109.
Angora, 11, 650, 654, 655.
Ani, 606.
Anianus, 322.
Anna Comnena, 609, 613, 620.
Anne of Savoy, 651.
Annesi, 269.
Anthemius, 334, 335, 355, 358.
Antioch, 124, 125, 131, 143, 175, 186, 189, 193, 238, 244, 248, 283, 288, 359, 370, 418, 458, 469-72, 479, 480, 484, 490, 519, 536, 542, 554, 555, 616, 617, 626, 632.
Antiochus, 356.
Antium, 75.
Antoninus Pius, 134-39, 141, 142, 146, 156, 157, 164, 243.
Antonius Primus, 88, 89.
Antony, Mark, 3, 4, 5, 24.
Aper, 205.
Apocalypse, 147.
Apollonia, 4.
Appian Way, 45, 347.
Apulia, 311, 610.
Aquileia, 144, 185, 233, 253, 256, 287, 323, 324.
Aquinum, 155.
Aquitania, 437, 452.
Arabia, 168, 379-447, 439, 451, 545, 569, 572, 576, 603, 604, 625.
Arabia Petræa, 119, 126, 128.
Arabian Nights, 442, 570.
Aradus, 549.
Aragon, 647.
Arbela, 439.
Arbogast, 255-57.
Arcadiopolis, 572.
Arcadius, 253, 257, 281, 284, 285, 300-5, 354, 355.
Argos, 301.
Ariadne, 359, 360.
Arianzus, 269, 274, 275.
Arius, 228-30, 238, 259, 262-66, 268, 271, 278-80, 285, 327, 329, 348-51, 355, 362, 367, 368, 531.
Aristides, 132.
Arkas, 471.
Arles, 226, 227, 310, 322, 332.
Armenia, 8, 79, 80, 124, 125, 128, 142, 143, 193, 211, 212, 241, 374, 433, 445, 456, 541-43, 551, 583, 594, 598, 606, 617.
Arminius (Hermann), 40.
Arpinum, 22.
Arsaces, 97.
Arsuf, 477, 489, 519.
Artavastos, 562, 563.
Artaxerxes, 182, 193.
Arunca, 20.
Ascalon, 473, 489, 513, 616.
Aspar, 357.
Aspermar, 554.
Assyria, 329.
Asturias, 435.
Athalaric, 351, 353.
Athanagild, 274.
Athanaric, 246, 251, 266.
Athanasius, 228, 230, 262-65, 268, 272, 276.
Athareb, 481, 625.
Athens, 15, 22, 24, 32, 124, 130, 132, 195, 235, 269, 274, 356, 376, 589, 601, 637, 649.
Attalia, 484, 626.
Attalus, 148, 307.
Attila, 317-24, 319, 325, 326, 330, 332, 344, 357, 451.
Attock, 654.
Atyo, 28.
Augustine, 24, 281, 290, 293, 294-99, 308, 328, 456.
Augustulus, 335, 336.
Augustus, 3-11, 15, 29-62, 83, 89, 97, 98, 108, 109, 114, 117, 119, 127, 129, 133, 136, 154, 173, 315, 380.
Aulus Plautius, 55.
Aurelianus, 193, 199-202, 207, 327.
Aureolus, 195.
Aus, 394.
Austria, 494, 506.
Auvergne, 332, 335.
Avars, 526, 528, 530, 532-34, 538, 541-45, 563.
Aventine, 42.
Avidius Cassius, 143, 145.
Avitus, 332, 333.

Axidares, 124.
Ayesha, 396, 412, 415, 421, 424-26.
Azof, 318.

Babylon, 420, 547.
Babylonia, 125, 329.
Backhouse, 265.
Badr, 391, 399.
Baduila. See Totila.
Bagdad, 441-47, 486, 584, 604, 605, 654.
Baiæ, 50.
Baian, 526.
Bajazet I., 652-55.
Baldwin I., Jerusalem, 468, 472, 477, 480, 481.
— II., 475, 478, 480, 481.
— III., 481, 484, 486.
— IV., 488.
— V., 488.
— I., Constantinople, 503, 625, 637, 639.
— II., Constantinople, 504, 625.
Balkans, 248, 251, 267, 374, 530, 534, 541, 552, 563, 570, 571.
Balkh, 428.
Baltic, 189, 242, 318.
Bangor, 297.
Bann Kainuka, 400.
— Kuraizah, 403.
— Nadir, 401.
Barca, 549.
Barcelona, 311.
Bar-Cocaba, 131.
Bardas, 574, 576.
Bari, 465, 466, 584.
Barmecides, 442, 443.
Basil, 266, 268-76, 288.
Basil I., 576, 580-84.
— II., 590, 593-95, 599, 629.
Basilike Library, 360.
Basiliscus, 334, 345, 359, 360.
Basques, 435.
Bassorah, 420, 422-25, 446.
Bassus, 5.
Batavia, 90, 91, 110.
Bath, 56, 109.
Bathsheba, 254.
Bavaria, 506.
Belbeis, 547.
Belgians, 341.
Belgrade, 345.
Belisarius, 331, 352, 366-75.
Benevento, 550.
Berbers, 428, 433, 440.
Berengaria, 492.
Berenice, 99.
Bernard of Clairvaux, 482-85, 625.
Bercea, 370.
Berytus, 88.
Bethlehem, 45, 62, 290, 292, 308, 511, 612.
Betriacum, 88.
Beyrom, 633.
Bibars, 517, 519, 521.
Bilal, 396, 406.
Bilbilis, 152.
Bithynia, 120, 123, 156, 182, 194, 208, 220, 242, 479, 536, 587, 592, 649.
Blanche of Castile, 516, 518.
Blandina, 148.
Bleda, 319.
Boadicea, 109, 110, 149.
Bodleian Library, 596.
Bœthius, 349, 350.
Bogomiles, 618.
Bohemond, 465-69, 472, 479, 480, 610, 611, 617.
Bokhara, 428, 433.
Bona, 295.
Bonifacius, 313, 314, 327, 328.
— of Montferrat, 503, 634-41.
Bononia, 4.
Bonus, 541, 543.
Borcovicium, 130.
Bordeaux, 436, 437, 456.
Bosnia, 583, 652.
Bosphorus, 171, 194, 220, 231, 435, 466, 483, 537, 543, 554, 556, 557, 579, 598, 611, 625, 630, 631, 635, 640, 651, 659, 664.
Bostra, 387.
Boulogne, 55, 56, 210, 216.
Bouvines, 508.
Boweib, 418.
Bowness, 130.
Branas, 630.
Brecon, 110, 111.
Bregetio, 244.
Brindisi, 4, 5, 18, 610.
Bringas, 588, 590.
Britain, 7-233 *passim*, 242, 243, 245, 252, 287, 303-5, 308, 319, 376, 456, 525.
Britannicus, 58-60, 71, 73, 98.
Brocchus, 198.
Brotheric, 255, 280.
Brusa, 650.
Bruttium, 311.
Brutus, 4, 32.
Bryce, 567, 568.
Buda Pesth, 319.
Bulgaria, 361, 374, 435, 436, 463, 464, 552-57, 563, 564, 570-80, 585, 586, 593, 594, 603, 629, 632, 633, 639, 640, 652.
Burgh-on-Sands, 130.
Burgundy, 312, 321, 332, 347, 349, 489, 493.
Burrus, 73, 74.
Bury, 48, 147.
Busento, 308.
Busir, 439.

Buvides, 447.
Byzantium, 167, 194, 228, 231, 379-447 *passim*, 451-522 *passim*, 525-661.

Cadiz, 434.
Cæcilian, 226, 227.
Cæcina, 85-88.
Cælestius, 297, 298.
Cæsar, Julius, 3-97 *passim*, 114, 129, 156, 193, 343, 541.
Cæsarea, Palestine, 88-92, 477, 493, 519, 540, 606.
— Cappadocia, 193, 269, 271-75.
Cagliari, 520.
Cairo, 420, 421, 427, 433, 444, 478, 486, 487, 497, 507, 514, 516, 604, 630.
Calabria, 308, 311, 562, 563.
Calagurris, 151.
Caledonia, 110, 111, 136, 169, 170, 309.
Callinicum, 254, 280.
Calpe, 434.
Calvin, 299.
Calpurnius, 80.
Camolodunum (Colchester), 56.
Campania, 15, 43, 89, 182, 308, 311, 333.
Campus, 108.
Cana, 507.
Canada, 337.
Candahar, 428.
Cannæ, 248.
Cantacuzenos, 651, 652.
Capelianus, 184.
Cape Wrath, 111.
Capitol, 50, 89, 102, 105, 108, 152.
Cappadocia, 8, 95, 142, 193, 266, 269, 271-74, 345, 433, 536, 542, 573, 606.
Capri, 38, 39, 43-45.
Caracalla, 169, 171-76, 197.
Caractacus, 56, 57, 109.
Carausius, 210, 211.
Carbeas, 583.
Cardiff Castle, 480.
Caria, 153.
Carinus, 205-7.
Carlisle, 130.
Carnuntum, 217.
Carpathia, 325.
Carrhæ, 175, 186, 193.
Carriden, 136.
Cartagena, 333-34.
Carthage, 18, 19, 94, 169, 196, 211, 243, 294, 297, 315, 328, 331, 334, 352, 368, 423, 428, 433, 479, 540, 549, 551, 553, 622.
Carus, 26, 205, 207.
Cascus, 128.
Caspian, 318.
Cassiodorus, 347, 351.
Cassius, 4.
Catalan Company, 647-49.
Catania, 584.
Cato, 16-18.
Catullus, 28.
Caucasus, 374, 543.
Celestine, 497.
Cerialis, 91, 105, 110.
Cestus Gallus, 92.
Ceuta, 434.
Chalcedon, 176, 194, 535, 536, 538, 540, 541.
Chalcis, 288.
Chaldea, 420.
Chalons, 202.
Champagne, Count of, 482, 489, 493, 654.
Charismans, 513, 514.
Charlemagne, 440, 442, 556-71, 577, 578.
Charles of Anjou, 516, 520, 521, 646.
Charles II., 75.
Charles Martel, 436, 437, 452, 558, 566, 578.
Chatti, 111, 112.
Cherson, 553, 554, 592.
Chester, 109, 110.
Chesters, 130.
China, 78, 317, 513, 576, 588, 654.
Chios, 659, 660.
Chosroes I., 124, 366-74, 405, 416, 529-44.
Christianity, 61-70 *sqq.*
Chrysostom, 270, 283-87, 305, 355.
Cibalis, 220.
Cicero, 4, 17-29, 32, 33, 161.
Cilicia, 24, 125, 167, 193, 235, 468, 490, 542, 554, 591, 651.
Cirencester, 110.
Cirta, 328.
Civilis, 91, 105.
Civita Vecchia, 119.
Civitot, 464, 466.
Claudius I., 5, 37, 53-60, 71, 74, 79, 87, 97, 98, 106, 109, 114, 149, 152, 154, 165.
— II., 198, 199.
Cleander, 160, 161.
Clement III., 459.
— V., 476.
Cleopatra, 5.
Clepho, 527.
Clerkenwell, 477.
Clermont, 459, 460, 613.
Clodia, 87.
Clyde, 110, 136, 170.
Cniva, 190.
Colaman, 464.
Colchester, 56, 109, 110.
Colchis, 374.
Cologne, 312, 463.
Colosseum, 96, 103, 108.
Colossus, 549.
Comana, 286.

Comedy of Errors, 16.
Commodus, 145, 158, 163-68, 197.
Como, 150, 155.
Conrad III., 483, 484, 486, 491, 493, 505, 624-26, 630.
Conrad of Montferrat, 488, 489.
Constance, 512.
Constans, 233, 234, 263, 264.
— II., 548-50.
Constantia, 219, 223.
— wife of Maurice, 530.
Constantine I. the Great, 200, 216-40, 246, 261, 263, 266, 268, 271, 286, 304, 308, 310, 356, 376, 456, 547, 612.
— II., 233-35.
— III., 548.
— IV., 442, 550, 552.
— V., 560-64.
— VI., 564-67, 578.
— VII., 586-88.
— VIII., 595.
— IX., 597-99.
— X., 605, 606.
— XI., 656-64.
— a Paulician, 581, 582.
Constantinople, 230 *sqq.*
Constantius, father of Constantine, 208-16, 222.
— son of Constantine, 233-35, 263-66, 276.
— husband of Placidia, 311, 313, 356.
Copts, 405, 539, 547.
Corbulo, 79.
Cordova, 434, 435, 440, 443, 444, 572, 604.
Corduba, 149, 152.
Corfu, 610, 624.
Corinth, 50, 194, 301, 374, 622, 624.
Corsica, 149, 333.
Cossacks, 325.
Council of Arles, 264.
— Clermont, 459, 460, 613.
— Milan, 264.
— Nicæa, 228, 229, 262, 266.
— Piacenza, 459.
— Trent, 293.
Crassus, 211.
Cremona, 30, 88.
Crete, 444, 447, 572, 573, 583, 588, 592.
Crimea, 194, 548, 592.
Crispus, 231.
Crumn, 570, 571, 578, 580.
Crusades, 447, 451-522, 609-61 *passim*.
Ctesiphon, 125, 143, 186, 205, 238, 419, 441.
Cucusus, 286.
Cynthia, 35.
Cyprian, 196.
Cyprus, 125, 423, 425, 474, 476, 492, 494, 516, 518, 548, 591, 629-32.
Cyrene, 125.
Cyrus, 540.
Cyzicus, 551.

DACIA, 112, 118, 119, 126, 128, 144, 145, 199, 200, 325, 340, 358.
Dagobert, 477.
Dalmatia, 10, 302, 335, 466, 567, 624.
Damascus, 387, 418, 424, 426, 427, 429, 431-34, 439, 441, 447, 484-87, 495, 505, 539, 546, 577, 626, 630.
Damasus, 288, 289.
Damietta, 507, 509, 516-18.
Dandolo, 496-503, 634, 635.
Dante, 31, 32.
Daras, 366.
Darius, 439.
Dastagerd, 544.
Daventry, 56.
David, 254, 506.
Deborah, 506.
Decebalus, 112, 118.
Decius, 187, 188-95, 197, 198.
Delhi, 654.
Delia, 34.
Delphi, 80.
Delta, 7, 439.
Demetrius, 641.
Democritus, 27.
Deo-gratias, 329.
Desiderius, 566.
Diocletian, 16, 171, 205-23, 230, 231, 302.
Dion Cassius, 159, 182.
Dizabul, 529.
Dneiper, 579, 598.
Dneister, 246.
Dobrudscha, 190, 534.
Domitia, 112.
Domitian, 95-97, 103, 105-18, 146, 152-56.
— Ahenobarbus, 59, 71.
Domninus, 252.
Donatists, 226, 227, 295, 296, 297, 315, 329.
Dorylæum, 467, 615, 626.
Dorystolum, 593.
Douai Bible, 290.
Douglas, 452.
Drusus, 5, 8, 34, 37, 39, 44, 53.
Dryden, 16.
Dukas, 586.
Durazzo (Dyrrhachium), 352, 465, 466, 610, 617, 641.
Dutch, 341.

EASTER, 229.
Edessa, 371, 468, 472, 477, 480-82, 486, 536, 549, 595, 596, 616, 625.
Edgar Atheling, 471.
Edict of Milan, 224.
Edward, Confessor, 600.
— I., 520, 521.
— II., 477.
— III., 238.

El Arish, 478, 480.
Elbe, 8, 203.
Eleanor, 492.
El Hakim, 612.
Elis, 301.
Ellak, 325.
Emesa, 175-77, 181, 418, 439, 447, 547.
Emico, 404.
Emmelia, 269.
Ennia, 49.
Ennius, 15-19.
Ephesus, 194, 484, 616.
Epiphanius, 349.
Epirus, 301, 373, 610, 641.
Ertogrul, 650, 654.
Erzeroum, 124.
Etna, 128.
Etruria, 15, 151.
Eucherius, 306.
Eudo, 436, 437.
Eudocia (Athenais), 356.
— wife of Romanus IV., 606, 607.
Eudoxia, wife of Arcadius, 284, 285, 305, 326, 331, 354, 355.
— wife of Valentinian III., 356.
Eugenius, Emperor, 256, 301.
— III., Pope, 482, 483.
— IV., Pope, 656, 657.
Euphemius, 572, 573.
Eusebius, 225, 263, 266, 271, 595.
Eustace of Boulogne, 465.
— crusader, 465.
— Grenier, 480.
Eutharic, 351.
Eutropius, 284, 354, 355.
Ezekiel, 381.

Farma, 547.
Fast of Atonement, 397, 398.
— Ramadan, 398.
Fatima, 388, 396, 400, 401, 415, 421, 446, 468, 467, 487.
Fausta, 218.
Faustina, 135.
Felicitas, 169.
Ferdinand, 441.
Ferrara, 656.
Festus, 78.
Fez, 444.
Fife, 10.
Firmus, 243.
Firth of Forth, 110, 111, 136, 170.
Flavian emperors, 87-113.
Flavian, Bishop, 253.
Flavius Clemens, 107.
Florence, 303, 656.
Florianus, 203.
Forfar, 110.
Fostat. See Cairo.
Frederick I., Barbarossa, 489, 490, 491, 631, 632, 633.
— II., 506, 508, 509, 511, 512, 515.
Friends, Society of, 582.
Fritigern, 246-48, 251.
Frontinus, 109-11.
Fronto, 156, 157.
Fucine, Lake, 55.
Fulk of Anjou, 457, 474, 481.
Fuscus, 112.

Gabriel, 383.
Gainas, 301, 354, 355.
Gaiseric, 314, 326-28, 330-34, 357, 358, 368.
Gaius (Caligula), 39, 44, 47-57, 83, 89, 92.
— (Jurist), 137, 365.
Galata, 645, 648, 661.
Galatia, 11, 433, 536.
Galba, 56, 84-93, 151.
Galen, 143, 144.
Galerius, 208-23.
Galgacus, 110.
Galilee, 62.
Galla, 253, 256, 310.
Gallienus, 192, 193, 197, 198, 266.
Gallipoli, 649, 652.
Gallus, Emperor, 190-92, 196.
— Julian's brother, 233, 234.
Gandzaca, 542, 544.
Gaza, 418, 514.
Gelimer, 331, 352, 368.
Geneva, 312.
Genghis Khan, 513.
Genoa, 458, 471, 481, 519, 612, 618, 623, 625, 643, 645, 658, 661.
George of Cappadocia, 238.
Georgia, 653.
Gepidæ, 346, 373, 526, 528.
Germanicus, 5, 37, 39, 40, 41, 44, 48, 53, 71.
Germanus, 369.
Gerontius, 310.
Geta, 169, 171, 172.
Ghibelline, 515.
Ghuzni, 428.
Gibbon, 161, 162, 175, 179, 186, 479.
Gibraltar, 204, 312, 328, 434.
Gilsland, 130.
Glycerius, 335, 345.
Godfrey, 465-79, 513, 616, 625.
Godric, 478.
Godwin, 600.
Gœthia, 266.
Golden Horn, 556, 659.
Gordian I., 184, 185.
— II., 184, 185.
— III., 186, 187.
Gothland, 189.
Gottschalk, 463.
Gradischtge, 118.
Graham's dyke, 136, 170.
Granada, 441.
Gratian, 241-59, 273, 277, 279.

Gregory, Emperor, 548, 549.
— Bishop, 263, 264.
— Nazianzen, 261, 269-74, 278, 283, 288.
— II., Pope, 566.
— III., Pope, 561, 566.
— VII., Pope, 454-60, 607, 608, 612.
— IX., 509, 512.
— X., 521.
Guelph, 515.
Guizot, 343.
Gundobad, 349.
Guy de Lusignan, 488, 491-94, 630, 632.

Habet-Deum, 329.
Hadi, 442.
Hadrian, Emperor, 94, 95, 127-36, 141, 142, 146, 156, 170, 243, 383.
Hadrian, Pope, 566.
Hadrianople. See Adrianople.
Hafsa, 400.
Halima, 386.
Hamadan, 419.
Hamah, 481.
Hamza, 400.
Hannibal, 541.
Harold, 600.
— Hardrada, 602.
Haroun al Raschid, 442, 443, 564, 570, 604.
Hasan, 401, 415, 424-32.
— General, 431-33.
Hashim, 386, 392, 422.
Hattin, 488, 650.
Hejag, 432.
Helena, 222, 232, 456, 612.
Heliogabalus, 176-81.
Helius, 80, 81.
Helvetia, 86.
Henry I., England, 480.
— II., England, 489, 492, 631, 632.
— IV., Germany, 463.
— VI., Germany, 490, 494, 497, 508.
— I., Latin emperor, 639-41.
Henry de Lusignan, 516.
Heraclea, 570.
Heracleia, 645.
Heracleonas, 548.
Heraclius, General, 394, 532, 537.
— Emperor, 405, 416-20, 537-47, 548, 554, 556, 558, 563, 565.
— officer, 326.
Herat, 428.
Herculaneum, 100-2.
Hermann, 40.
Hermann of Salza, 510.
Hermanric, 244, 246, 351.
Herod the Great, 49, 57, 94.
— Antipas, 49.
— Agrippa I., 49, 57.
— — II., 57.
Herodias, 280.
Heruli, 373.
Herzegovina, 583.
Hezekiah, 540.
Hierapolis, 370.
Hijra, 395.
Hildibad, 372.
Hildebrand (Gregory VII.).
Hindu, 413, 414.
Hindustan, 653.
Hiong-Nu, 317.
Hippo, 295, 297, 298, 315, 328.
Hippolytus, 158.
Hisham, 436-38.
Hodgkin, 261.
Holland, 204.
Holy Roman Empire, 567, 568.
Holy Sepulchre, 472, 477, 478, 481.
Homer, 14, 15, 16, 32.
Honoria, 311.
Honorius, Emperor, 253, 257, 281, 296-313, 354, 356, 357.
— III., Pope, 509.
Horace, 14, 20, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 151, 156.
Hormisdas, 530, 532.
Hortensius, 24.
Hosein, 401, 415, 424-32, 438.
Housesteads, 130.
Hugh de Payne, 475.
Hugh of Vermandois, 465, 466, 470, 472, 479.
Hunain, 408, 409.
Hungary, 231, 319-24, 325, 327, 463-66, 475, 484, 490, 506, 513, 583, 603, 624, 631, 634, 657.
Hunyadi, 657.
Hunneric, 331.
Huns, 246, 312, 317-25, 335, 355, 357, 374, 526, 603.
Hussites, 583.
Hyksos, 380.

Iberia, 374.
Ibrahim, 438.
Iceni, 56, 107, 109.
Iconium, 479, 490, 626, 627, 631, 633, 640, 649, 650.
Ignatius, 574, 575, 580, 581.
Iliad, 32.
India, 179, 379, 380, 413, 452, 457, 498, 576, 577.
Indus, 428.
Inferno, 31.
Innocent II., 482.
— III., 497, 502-8, 634, 635, 637, 640.
— IV., 515.
Irak, 416, 417, 432, 441, 446.
Ireland, 110, 297.
Irenæus, 159.
Irene, 442, 443, 564-70, 620,

Isaac I., 605.
— II., 490, 498, 500, 501, 629-36.
— Comnenus, 492, 630, 632.
Isabella, 493, 505.
Isauria, 276, 359-61, 555, 556, 568.
Ishmael, 383.
Isidore, monk, 263.
— Cardinal, 658, 660.
Islam, 379-447, 451-522 *passim*.
Ismalians, 446.
Isonzo, 346.
Issus, 541.
Istria, 231, 569.
Italica, 117.
Italicus (Silius), 109, 151.

Jafr, 407.
James I., 54.
Janiculum, 79.
Janissaries, 651.
Jeddah, 381.
Jericho, 489.
Jerome, 137, 277, 287-93, 308, 456, 612.
Jerusalem, 51, 57, 62, 65, 92-98, 131, 230, 238, 330, 368, 397, 418, 419, 433, 451-522 *passim*, 539-47, 612-16, 630.
Jezebel, 280.
Joanna, 492.
Joannes, 313.
Job, 603.
John of Cappadocia, 367.
— of Ephesus, 534.
— King of England, 506.
— Pope, 350, 362.
— de Brienne, 505, 507, 509, 511, 642.
John Grant, 658.
John I., 583, 592, 593.
— II., 620-23, 627.
— III., 641, 642, 646.
— IV., 643.
— V., 651-53.
— VI., 656.
Joinville, 516, 520.
Joppa, 117, 418, 478, 489, 493, 494, 497, 519, 632, 633.
Jordan, 232.
Jordanes, 247.
Joscelin I., 480, 481.
— II., 482, 486.
Josephus, 93, 94.
Jotapata, 93.
Jovian, 241-49, 259, 264.
Jovinian, 290, 291.
Jugurtha, 28.
Julia, 37, 38.
— Domna, 169, 171, 175.
— Mæsa, 176.
— Mamea, 181, 183.
Julian, Emperor, 233-235, 240, 241, 259, 265, 269, 271, 276, 277, 360.
— Count, 434.
Julianus, 112.
— Didius, 165, 166.
Julius Nepos, 335.
Justin I., 350, 362, 364.
— II., 525, 529.
Justina, 245, 250, 254.
Justinian I., 133, 237, 331, 349, 351-56, 362-76, 386, 501, 525-29, 545, 559, 581, 584.
— II., 433, 552-54, 565, 582.
Justiniani, 658-60.
Justin Martyr, 138, 147.
Juvenal, 109, 155.

Kaaba, 382, 388, 389, 392, 404, 406, 408, 431, 447.
Kabul, 428.
Kadesia, 418.
Kahina, 433.
Kairwan, 428, 434, 443, 446.
Kariba, 425.
Karijites, 426, 433.
Karmathians, 446, 447.
Kashgar, 653.
Kerbela, 429, 438.
Kerboga, 469.
Khabour, 212.
Khadijah, 387-89, 391, 393.
Khaibar, 404, 405.
Khalid, 401, 406, 407, 416, 417.
Khalil, 522.
Khartpert, 480.
Khazars, 543, 559.
Khazraj, 394.
Khorasan, 418, 428, 432, 438, 439, 441-48, 446, 604, 605.
Kilij Arslan, 464, 627.
Kitchin, Dean, 442.
Knights of St. John, 475-77, 488, 489, 510, 519.
Knights Templar, 475-77, 488, 489, 510, 519, 522.
Knights Teutonic, 475, 476, 491, 510.
Kobad, 361, 366, 387-447 *passim*, 546.
Kossova, 652, 657.
Koutouz, 519.
Kuba, 396.
Kufa, 410, 418-32 *passim*, 446.
Kuraish, 386, 422.
Kyrillos, 579.

Lactantius, 215, 223, 304.
Ladislas, 657.
Lælianius, 201.
Lætus, 169.
Lalla Rookh, 441.
Languedoc, 583.
Laodicea, 253, 468, 472, 484, 616, 631.
Larissa, 610.
Lateran, 227.
Laurentius, 196.
Lebanon, 292, 497, 553.

Leo I., Pope, 324, 330, 344.
— IV., Pope, 444.
— I., Emperor, 334, 335, 344, 358, 359, 361.
— II., Emperor, 345, 359.
— III., Emperor, 435-37, 451, 452, 555-67, 581, 582.
— IV., Emperor, 564.
— V., Emperor, 571, 572.
— VI., Emperor, 581, 586.
Leontius, 553, 554.
Leopold, 494.
Lepidus, 3, 4, 5, 24.
Levant, 622, 644.
Lewes, J. D., 123.
Liberius, 347, 374.
Licinius, 218-28.
Liguria, 349.
Lilybæum, 353.
Lincoln, 110.
Lindsay, 596.
Lithuania, 477.
Livia, 5, 37.
Livy, 30, 33, 34, 50.
Loire, 312, 436.
Lollius Urbius, 136.
Lombards, 200, 323, 373, 526-28, 533, 550, 565, 566.
London, 56, 75, 110, 211, 492, 576.
Longinus, 527.
Lorium, 138.
Louis I., 573.
— VI., 641.
— VII., 482-86, 624.
— IX., 504, 515-21.
Lucania, 311.
Lucanus, 152, 156.
Lucilius, 20.
Lucilla, 160.
Lucius, 37.
Lucretius, 14, 27.
Lucullus, 45, 335.
Lusitania, 74, 85.
Luther, 299, 561, 581.
Lycia, 549, 552.
Lydda, 418, 451.
Lydia, 649.
Lyons, 105, 148, 167, 252, 512, 646.

Macedonia, 346, 354, 549, 576.
Macrina, 269.
Macrinus, 175, 176.
Macro, 49.
Mæcenas, 5, 29-35.
Magnentius, 234.
Magnesia, 648.
Magyars, 320, 552, 584, 603.
Mahmoud, 603.
Maitland, 289.
Majorian, 333.
Malaga, 434.
Malek Ahdel, 498, 506.
Malek Kamel, 509.
Malik Shah, 455, 607
Malta, 477.
Mamelukes, 445, 519
Mamun, 443-45.
Maniakes, 595, 596.
Mansur, 441, 442.
Mansurah, 517, 519.
Mantua, 30.
Manuel I., 483, 486, 487, 621-28.
— II., 653-55.
Manzikert, 455, 606.
Marcellinus, 334.
Marcellus, 37, 212.
Marcia, 158, 159, 163.
Marcian, 320, 357, 358.
Marcius Turbo, 128, 129.
Marcomanni, 144, 146.
Marcus Aurelius, 70, 135, 138, 140-48, 156-59, 165, 166, 195, 197.
Mardaites, 553.
Mardia, 220.
Marguerite, 516.
Margus, 206, 320.
Maria, 487.
Marmora, 194, 204, 230, 551, 556, 643, 649, 650, 658.
Marseilles, 218, 469.
Martial, 109, 152.
Martin, Pope, 551.
Martina, 548.
Martyropolis, 542.
Marwa, 382.
Mary of Magdala, 64.
— Virgin, 290, 387.
— daughter of Isabella, 505.
— sister of Moses, 387.
— the Copt, 405, 408.
Mathew, Father, 459.
Mauretania, 184, 192.
Maurice, 530-36.
Maxentius, 216-23.
Maximian, 207-23.
Maximin, 183, 184, 185.
Maximus, joint Emperor, 185.
— Governor of Britain, 252-53, 309.
— Emperor, 326, 332.
Mayence, 457, 463.
Meander, 484.
Mecca, 379-447 *passim*, 458, 545.
Media, 143, 544.
Medina, 379-447 *passim*, 545.
Medway, 56.
Mehdi, 441, 442, 446.
Melisend, 481.
Melitene, 571, 583.
Memnon, 128.
Memphis, 420, 547.
Menæchmi, 16.
Merivale, Dean, 148.
Merseburg, 464.
Merv, 439, 443.

Merwan I., 432.
— II., 438, 439, 440.
Mery-sur-Seine, 322.
Messalina, 58, 59.
Messina, 492.
Methodios, 599.
Metz, 484.
Mezecius, 551.
Michael I., 570, 571, 582.
— II., 572, 573.
— III., 574-80.
— IV., 596.
— V., 597.
— VI., 605.
— VII., 606-8, 611, 612.
— VIII., 643-47.
Michael, son of Andronicus, 648, 649.
Midian, 119.
Milan, 18, 156, 195, 208, 223-27, 234, 242, 253-56, 264, 278, 280, 294, 295, 300, 302, 329, 334, 346, 348, 527.
Milman, Dean, 279.
Mina Valley, 382, 411.
Mincio, 324.
Misenum, 45, 101, 150.
Modestinus, 169, 181.
Modestus, 272.
Mœsia, 112, 145, 187, 190-200, 206, 222, 247, 264, 266, 302, 344, 528, 549.
Moguls, 650.
Mohammed and Mohammedanism, 193, 369, 379-447, 451-522, 545-661 *passim*.
Mohammed I., 655-61.
Moharram, 430.
Mokanna, 441, 442.
Molière, 16.
Monico, 294, 295.
Mongolia, 317.
Mongols, 603.
Montaser, 445.
Moore, 441.
Moors, 573.
Morocco, 428.
Moselle, 464.
Moslemah, 557.
Moslems, 379-447, 451-522, 545-641 *passim*.
Mostain, 445.
Mosul, 469.
Motamed, 446.
Motanna, 418.
Motasim, 445.
Motawakkel, 445.
Mount Moriah, 475.
Mozeley, Canon, 298.
Muavia I., 422, 424-28, 432, 433, 438, 549, 551, 553.
— II., 431, 432.
Mucianus, 87-89, 105.
Muir, Sir William, 546.
Mukaukis, 405.
Munro, 33.
Musa, 433, 434.
Musab, 394, 432.
Muta, 407, 412, 415, 416, 545.
Mutina, 4.
Mylasa, 153.
Myriokephalon, 627.
Mysia, 573, 649.

Nablûs (Shechem), 147.
Nævius, 15, 16.
Naila, 424.
Naissus (Nisch), 198, 222, 463, 598.
Najran, 410.
Naples, 102, 150, 152, 369, 373, 465, 511, 550.
Narbonne, 311, 436.
Narcissus, 58.
Narses (of Justinian), 366, 367, 373, 527, 528.
— (of Phocas), 536.
Navarre, 492.
Nazareth, 488, 511, 519, 521.
Nazianzus, 274, 275.
Nebuchadrezzar, 383.
Negus, 392.
Nehemiah, 267.
Nemea, 80.
Nero, Emperor, 59, 61, 71-84, 87-95, 98-103, 107-9, 124, 146, 149-52, 154, 155, 158, 178.
Nero, Tiberius Claudius, 5, 37.
Nerva, 114-16, 117, 119, 146.
Netherlands, 91.
Nettleship, 33.
Nevahend, 419, 548.
Newcastle, 180.
Newman, 274.
Niblis, 193.
Nicæa, 182, 228, 249, 262, 286, 457, 467, 479, 484, 503, 607, 611, 615, 626, 637, 639, 642, 643, 646, 649, 650.
Nicene Creed, 229, 260, 261.
Nicephorus I., 443, 568-70, 582.
— II., 588-93.
— husband of Anna, 620.
Nicetas, 628.
Nicholas I., 575.
— IV., 522.
Nicodemus, 619.
Nicomedia, 208, 212-16, 230, 232, 263, 266, 533, 637, 650.
Niebuhr, 137, 143.
Niger, 166, 167.
Nile, 128, 191, 507
Nineveh, 542.
Nisbis, 186, 241.
Nismes, 436.
Nola, 11.
Norbanus, 107.
Noricum, 144.

Normans, 454, 596, 598, 600, 602, 609, 611.
Norway, 602.
Noureddin, 482, 486, 487, 626.
Novograd, 190.
Numerian, 205, 207.
Numidia, 28, 294, 368.

Obeidalla, 446.
Octavia, 5, 37, 71.
— Nero's wife, 59, 74, 75.
Octavius. See Augustus.
Odenathus, 193-95, 200.
Odeum, 108.
Odo of Bayeux, 466.
Odovacar, 335, 346, 360, 567.
Olga, 592.
Olybrius, 335.
Olympia, 80.
Omar I., 392, 400, 410, 425, 441, 452, 547, 548.
— II., 436.
— Mosque of, 452, 475, 511, 612.
Ommeyads, 422, 427, 432-39, 440.
Oppius Sabinus, 112.
Orestes, 335.
Origen, 187, 196, 290.
Orkhan, 650, 652.
Orleans, 312, 322.
Orontes, 484.
Osama, 412, 415.
Ostia, 55, 119, 295, 326, 330, 444.
Ostorius Scapula, 109.
Ostrogoths, 190, 244, 246, 247, 302, 318, 335, 344, 345, 357, 361.
Othman (Caliph), 398, 400, 406, 421-27, 432, 548-50.
— (Turk), 650.
Otho, 74, 85-91.
Otranto, 598.
Otto, 508.
Ottoman Turks, 650-61.
Ovid, 14, 30, 35, 36.
Oxford, 596.
Oxus, 419, 433.

Pacorus, 142, 143.
Pacuvius, 18.
Padua, 33.
Palatine, 50, 52, 177.
Paleologus, 504, 610, 643.
Palermo, 466, 624.
Pallas, 58.
Palma, 119.
Palmyra, 193, 194, 200, 201, 444.
Pamphylia, 484.
Pannonia, 144, 145, 166, 187, 191, 199, 200, 220, 242, 244, 252, 302, 344, 345.
Pantheon, 103.
Papinian, 169, 172.
Papinius Statius, 109, 152.
Paradise Lost, 17.
Paradiso, 31.
Paris, 235, 308, 312.
Parthia, 5, 7, 8, 40, 79, 97, 117, 123-28, 142-45, 168, 175, 182.
Parthomasiris, 124.
Paula, 289, 291, 292, 456.
Paulicians, 570, 574, 581-83, 618.
Paulina, 184.
Paulus Claudius, 91.
Paulus, jurist, 169, 181.
Pavia, 198, 347, 373, 527.
Pechenegs, 593, 598.
Pelagius, 292, 297, 298.
— Cardinal, 507, 509.
Pelekanon, 650.
Pella, 418.
Peloponnesus, 593, 637.
Pelusium, 487.
Pentapolis, 569.
Pentecost, 67, 68.
Pentland Firth, 111.
Pepin, 560, 566, 578.
Perennis, 160.
Perpetua, 169.
Perseus, 151.
Persia, 7, 182-87, 194, 201-12, 238-41, 248, 361-80, 413-19, 433, 451-56.
Persian Gulf, 125.
Pertinax, 164-66.
Peter the Hermit, 460-64, 468, 473, 479, 613, 614.
Peter Bartholomew, 469, 470.
Peter of Courtenay, 641.
Petra, 119.
Petronius, 51.
Phaon, 81.
Pharaoh, 558.
Pharsalia, 21, 152.
Philadelphia, 631, 652.
Philip I., Roman Emperor, 186-88, 197.
— I., King of France, 465, 480.
— II., King of France, 489, 492, 493, 505, 631, 632.
— III., 521.
— IV., 476.
Philippi, 4, 32.
Philippicus, 554, 555.
Philippopolis, 190, 466.
Philo, 47.
Phœnicia, 302, 375, 379, 549.
Phocas, 532, 535-39.
Photius, 574, 575-80, 581.
Phrygia, 160, 360, 606, 627.
Piacenza, 459, 612.
Picenum, 311.
Pictor, 16.
Picts, 223, 242.
Pincian, 82, 307.
Pisa, 458, 471, 481, 612, 618, 621, 623, 625.
Pisidia, 555, 569.

Piso, Calp., 40, 80, 81, 149, 152.
— Licinian, 85.
Pityus, 286.
Pius V., 153.
Placentia, 86, 200.
Placidia, 310, 316, 356, 357.
Plautia, 58.
Plautius, 56, 91, 109.
Plautus, 16, 18.
Plotina, 127.
Pliny the elder, 101, 102, 150, 151, 155.
— the younger, 70, 101, 106, 109, 120, 123, 132, 153, 155, 156.
Po, 306, 324, 370.
Poitiers, 437, 452, 558, 566.
Poland, 513.
Polentia, 303, 305.
Polybius, 58.
Polycarp, 147.
Pompeii, 100-2.
Pompey, 3, 49, 383.
Pontine marshes, 347.
Pontius Pilate, 45, 51, 52, 76, 92.
Pontus, 8, 204, 269, 433, 542, 545.
Poppæa, 74, 75, 80, 85.
Porta Asinaria, 370.
— Flaminia, 370.
— Salaria, 307, 308.
— Romana, 658-60.
— Viminalis, 42.
Portugal, 312, 327.
Postumus, 195, 201.
Pothinus, 148.
Presthlava, 593.
Primus, 105.
Prisca, 119.
Priscus, 153, 190.
Probus, 203-7, 242.
Procheiron, 581.
Proclus, 362.
Procopius, 245.
Propertius, 35.
Provence, 335, 465, 484, 583.
Prussia, 189, 194, 477.
Pruth, 246.
Pulcheria, 320, 355, 357, 358.
Punic Wars, 15, 17, 18, 345.
Puteoli, 50.
Puy, 465.
Pyrenees, 192, 303, 311, 312, 321, 327, 436, 437.

Quadi, 144, 146, 242, 244.
Quadratus, 132.
Quintilian, 35, 109, 151, 153, 155.
Quod-vult, 329.

Radagasius, 302-4.
Rætia, 144, 200, 303.
Raihana, 403.
Rakka, 434, 444.
Ramadan, 427.
Ramleh, 478, 479, 493.
Ratisbon, 484, 490, 631.
Ravenna, 145, 169, 193, 217, 267, 302, 306, 310, 313-16, 321, 324, 327, 346-51, 362, 369-73, 528, 550, 562, 569.
Raymond of Toulouse, 465, 466, 472, 479.
— Count of Tiberias, 488.
Red Sea, 119, 380, 381, 576.
Reggio, 308, 369, 550.
Reginald of Chatillon, 488.
Resina, 102.
Rhazates, 544.
Rhodes, 22, 425, 477, 549.
Rhone, 515.
Richard I., 489, 492-95, 505, 630, 631.
— of Cornwall, 512.
Ricimer, 332-35, 358.
Riviera, 335.
Robert Guiscard, 465, 610, 617, 646.
— of Courtenay, 641, 642.
— of Flanders, 465, 466, 480, 612.
— of Normandy, 465-68, 472, 480.
Robertson, 583.
Roderick, 434.
Roger de Flor, 647, 648.
Roger of Sicily, 478, 624.
Roman Empire, 1-376.
Rome, 1-376, 451-641 *passim*.
Romanus I., 587.
— II., 447, 588-90, 593.
— III., 595, 596.
— IV., 455, 606.
Romulus. See Augustulus.
Roncesveaux, 440.
Roum, 464, 479, 607, 614.
Rufinus, 257, 288, 290, 301, 354.
Rugila, 319.
Rukyyah, 396, 400, 421.
Russia, 128, 325, 513, *533, 579, 585,* 592, 593, 597, 598.
Rustem, 418.

Sad, 419, 421.
Saes, 542, 543.
Safa, 382.
Safed, 519.
Safiyah, 404.
Saladin, 446, 487-95, 519, 626, 630, 632.
Sallust, 28.
Salona, 215, 219.
Salvius Julianus, 133, 137.
Samara, 445, 446.
Samarcand, 433, 654, 655.
Samaria, 57.
Samaritans, 52, 147.
Samnium, 311.
Samuel, King of Bulgaria, 593, 594.
Sanskrit, 267.
Sapor I., 193, 194, 211.
— II., 232-35, 241.
Sarablagas, 542.

Saracens, 193, 379-447 *passim*, 451-22 *passim*, 546 *sqq*.
Saragossa, 435.
Sardica, 264, 598.
Sardinia, 16, 334, 368, 373, 433, 550, 555.
Sardis, 616.
Sargon, 383.
Sarmatia, 128, 129, 186, 220, 231, 232, 242, 345.
Sarus, 542.
Sasima, 276.
Sassan, 182.
Sassinides, 419.
Saturninus, 107, 204.
Sauda, 396.
Save, 250.
Saxa Rubra, 219, 223.
Saxons, 189, 210, 242, 312, 319, 339, 376.
Scandinavians, 579, 585, 592.
Scapula, 56.
Scinde, 433.
Scipio, 17.
Scotland, 110.
Scots, 242.
Scott, Sir Walter, 452.
Scribonia, 5, 37.
Scutari, 220, 500.
Scythians, 190, 203.
Selef, 490.
Seine, 322.
Sejanus, 39, 42, 44, 45, 51.
Seleucia, 143, 205.
Selinus, 125.
Seneca, 72-74, 80, 107, 149-52.
Sennacherib, 540.
Septuagint, 292.
Serena, 300.
Sergius, 541, 543.
Servia, 198, 230, 624, 652.
Servius Tullius, 200.
Seth, 383.
Severus, Alexander, 181-83.
— Flavius Valerius, 216, 217, 223.
— Julius, 131.
— Libius, 334.
— Septimius, 130, 166-70, 172, 174, 176, 197.
Severianus, 142.
Seville, 117.
Sextus, 3, 4, 5.
Shahen, 540.
Shahr Barz, 539, 542-44.
Shakespeare, 16.
Sheba, 380.
Shebib, 433.
Shirkhuh, 487.
Shushan, 419.
Sibylla, 489, 491.
Sicily, *passim*.
Siffin, 427.
Sigismund, 653.
Silchester, 110.
Silistria, 593.
Silverius, 369.
Simeon, 586.
Sinaitic Peninsula, 119.
Singeric, 311.
Singidunum, 345, 533.
Sirmium, 203, 204, 208, 250, 528.
Sirœs, 544.
Sixtus, Bishop, 196.
Sivas, 654.
Slavs, 316, 374, 532-38, 549-52, 563, 564, 584, 593, 594, 618, 652.
Smargadus, 528.
Smith, 273.
Smyrna, 147, 616.
Socrates, 67.
Soliman, 434-36, 555.
Solomon, 380, 471, 547.
Solway, 110, 130, 136, 170.
Soudan, 446.
Spain, *passim*.
Sparta, 194, 301.
Spoleto, 191, 192, 372.
St. Albans, 56, 57, 65.
— James, 57, 65, 286, 502.
— John, Apostle, 65, 147.
— — Baptist, 475, 502, 504.
— — Eleemon, 475.
— Marks, 502.
— Paul, 46, 57, 76, 78, 79, 267.
— Peter, 57, 64, 65, 79, 507, 561.
— Peter's, 567.
— Sophia, 285, 365, 525, 599, 644, 656, 660, 661.
— Thomas, 507.
— Timothy, 78.
Stadium, 108.
Stamford Bridge, 602.
Statius, 18.
Stauracius, 570.
Stephen, 271.
— of Blois, 465, 466, 470, 472, 478, 479.
Stilicho, 257, 300-6, 325, 327, 354.
Strasburg, 322.
Stridon, 287.
Suetonius Paulinus, 109, 110.
— Tranquillus, 156.
Suevi, 193, 304, 312, 327.
Suleiman, 607, 611.
Sulla, 22.
Sulpicianus, 165.
Sviatoslav, 592.
Swabia, 490, 491, 631.
Sweden, 189.
Symmachus, 349, 350.
— Bishop, 361.
Syracuse, 103, 204, 444, 550, 551, 584.
Syria, *passim*.
Szedegin, 657.

Tabuk, 409.
Tacitus, 14, 76, 77, 106, 109, 111, 118, 150-56, 189, 202, 208.
Taginæ, 373, 527.
Taif, 393, 408.
Talha, 424, 425.
Tancred, crusader, 465-68, 472, 479, 480, 617.
— King of Sicily, 492.
Taranto, 15, 115, 550.
Tarik, 434.
Tarsus, 193, 219, 235, 241, 479, 573.
Tartars, 190, 246, 317-19, 323-25, 513, 519, 526, 654.
Taurus, 359, 361, 547, 562, 631.
Tehuda, 428.
Teias, 373.
Telemachus, 303.
Tenchebrai, 480.
Tennyson, 28.
Tephrike, 583.
Terence, 18-20, 156.
Terni, 153.
Tetricus, 202.
Teutons, 190, 317, 318, 325, 327, 366, 367, 508, 567.
Thagaste, 294, 295.
Thames, 56, 98.
Thebes, 601, 624.
Theobald, 497.
Theodahad, 353, 369.
Theodemir, 344, 345, 359, 360.
Theodora, wife of Justinian, 363, 364, 367, 525.
— — Theophilus, 573, 574.
Theodora, daughter of Maximian, 208, 222.
— niece of Manuel, 486.
— sister of Zoe, 597-600, 605.
Theodore, brother of Heraclius, 543, 544.
— Angelus, 641.
— I., Lascaris, 501, 503, 636, 639-41, 646.
— Triarius, 360.
— II., 504.
Theodoric the Great, 321-23, 332, 341-53, 359, 360, 362, 366, 373, 527.
— II., 332.
Theodosius I., 250-57, 259, 260, 268, 273, 277-80, 281, 284, 300, 301, 305, 310, 314, 326, 354, 356.
— II., 237, 313, 319, 320, 356, 357.
— III., 305, 435, 555.
Theophano, 590, 591.
Theophilus, Emperor, 445, 573, 574.
— Bishop of Alexandria, 259.
— — Gœthia, 266.
Thermantia, 301.
Thessalonica, 220, 251, 255, 280, 301, 345, 503, 583, 586, 601, 640, 642.
Thessaly, 346.
Theudas, 374.
Thibet, 317.
Thomas, General, 572.
Thorismund, 321, 323, 332.
Thoron, 497.
Thrace, *passim*.
Thucydides, 28.
Thuringians, 347.
Tiber, 134, 176, 177, 179, 289, 444, 445.
Tiberias, 417, 488, 519, 546, 630.
Tiberius I., 7, 8, 11, 30, 36-52, 55, 60, 76, 92, 98, 114, 154.
— II., 528-33, 554.
— Alexander, 87, 92.
Tibullus, 34.
Tibur, 32, 134.
Tigellinus, 74.
Tigris, 125, 212, 239, 241, 416, 419, 441, 445, 653.
Timestheus, 186.
Timour (Tamerlane), 653-55.
Tiridates, 80, 124, 211, 212.
Tirmus, 201.
Titus, 88, 93-107, 330, 342, 368, 530.
Togodumnus, 56.
Togrul Beg, 605, 606.
Toledo, 260, 434.
Tolosa, 312.
Tomi, 36.
Totila, 372, 373, 527.
Toulouse, 323, 332, 436.
Trajan, 116, 117-28, 131-33, 141, 146, 153-56, 188.
Trapani, 521.
Trebizond, 194.
Trèves, 208, 217, 222, 230, 244, 263, 463.
Tribonian, 365.
Tricamaron, 368.
Trinobantes, 56.
Tripoli (Africa), 334, 551.
— (Palestine), 479, 489, 490, 505, 519, 521, 549, 647.
Tristan, 521.
Troy, 15, 31.
Troyes, 322.
Tufa, 346.
Tullia, 24.
Tunis, 428, 443, 510, 521.
Turin, 219, 223, 303.
Turkestan, 190, 317, 529, 653.
Turks, 320, 444.
— Ottoman, 581-661 *passim*.
— Seljuk, 446, 447, 451-522 *passim*, 626, 529-650 *passim*.
Turkey, 447.
Turnu Severin, 119, 129.
Tuscany, 311.
Tusculum, 17.
Tyler, 265.

Tyne, 110, 130, 136, 170.
Tyre, 381, 481, 489, 493, 494, 505, 618, 630.

Uhud, 401, 406.
Ukaz, 381.
Ukbah, 399.
Ulfilas, 247, 251, 266, 268, 284, 299, 327.
Ulmann, 261.
Ulpian, 169, 181, 182.
Umbria, 191, 192, 200, 373.
Umm Kulthum, 396, 401, 421.
United States, 189, 337.
Uprauda, 362.
Upsala, 267.
Ur, 241.
Ural, 318.
Urban II., 459, 460, 462, 473, 613.
— III., 489.
— IV., 646.
— V., 652.
Uriah, 254.
Utica, 15.

Valence, 321.
Valens, officer of Vitellius, 85, 86, 88.
— joint with Valentinian I., 242-51, 259, 264, 271-73, 276, 279, 300, 318, 563.
Valentia, 243.
Valentinian I., 242-49, 259, 264, 279.
— II., 250, 252-56, 259, 279.
— III., 311, 313, 321, 323, 325, 326, 330, 344, 356-58.
Valeria, 208, 219.
Valerian, Emperor, 192, 193, 196-98, 266.
Valerius, 295.
Van, 542, 653.
Vandals, 189, 268, 298-300, 304, 305, 312, 314, 315, 325-34, 347, 352, 357, 358, 361, 366-68, 375.
Varahnes, 532.
Varangians, 579.
Varna, 657.
Varro, 20.
Varus, 8, 40.
Vatican, 23, 157.
Venetia, 302, 303, 323, 527.
Venice, 324, 481, 497-504, 562, 569, 570, 576, 610, 618, 621, 622, 634-38, 642-45, 658, 661.
Verdun, 463.
Verina, 359.
Verona, 28, 137, 187, 346, 347, 527.
Verus Ælius, 134.
Verus Lucius, 135, 141, 143, 156, 160.
Verus Priscus, 143, 144.
Vespasian, 56, 87-99, 102, 105, 106, 110-17, 131, 146, 151, 153, 173, 383.
Vesuvius, 100-3, 150, 156, 359.
Vetranio, 234.
Vezelay, 483, 492.
Via Sacra, 98.
Victor III., 458, 612.
Victoria, 201, 202.
Victorinus, 201.
Vienna, 504.
Vienne, 148, 310.
Vindex, 81.
Vindobona, 145.
Virgil, 14, 15, 17, 26, 27, 30-3, 50, 100, 151.
Visigoths, 190, 246, 247, 311, 312, 314, 318-22, 327, 335, 345, 347-49 434.
Vitalian, 184.
Vitellius, 52, 85-91, 102, 105.
Vitry, 482.
Volaterra, 151.
Volckmann, 464.
Volga, 318.
Vologeses, 79, 142.
Vulgate, 290, 293.

Walamir, 344, 345.
Waldensians, 582.
Wales, 57, 109, 415.
Wallachia, 535, 633.
Walia, 311, 332.
Walid I., 433-35, 555.
— II., 438.
Wallsend, 130.
Walter de Poissi, 463, 464, 614.
Waraka, 389.
Wathek, 445.
Watling Street, 110.
Weser, 192.
West Kilpatrick, 136.
Westphalia, 267.
Widemir, 335, 344, 345.
Wigtonshire, 110.
William I., 457, 465, 470, 480.
— II., 480.
Witica, 434.
Witigis, 369, 370, 372.
Worms, 484, 494.

Xeres, 434.

Yathrib, 383, 394, 396-406
Yemen, 381, 382.
Yermuk, 417, 546.
Yezdegird, 182, 418, 419.
Yezid I., 428, 429, 431.
— II., 432, 436.
— III., 438.
York, 170, 172, 216, 223.

Zabeir, 421.
Zaid, 401, 402, 407, 412.
Zainab, 401.

Zapetra, 573.
Zara, 634, 635.
Zeid, 389, 421.
Zeinab, 396, 397.
Zenghi, 481, 482, 486, 625.
Zeno, 336, 345, 346, 359, 360, 361.
Zenobia, 194, 200, 201.
Zimisces, 592, 593.
Zobeir, 424, 425, 429, 430, 432.
Zoe, 586, 595-99.
Zoroaster, 546.
Zuyder Zee, 319.

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